

COUNTRY LIFE

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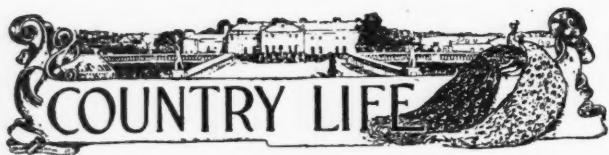
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MISS ALICE HUGHES,

MRS. WALTER FARQUHAR.

52, Gower Street.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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NINETEEN HUNDRED ... AND THREE

THIS issue of COUNTRY LIFE is dated to come out on the day after Christmas, and before another number appears 1903 will have passed away, to join the great multitude of years that have been, and now are, known only by the events that happened in them. In very few respects is it likely to be remembered with pleasure. Country work and country pleasure—which are, of course, the chief interests in our pages—have both been spoilt by the extraordinary runs of wet weather. Agriculture, still the greatest of our industries, has received a blow from which it will take it a long time to recover. Shooting was ruined before the rearing time ended, as the wet grass proved fatal to so many young birds. Hunting has been conducted in a morass, and the only chance of outdoor amusement remaining is that of the coming of a frost which might convert into ice the temporary lakes into which so many fields have been turned. With it all there has been going on, to the infinite disturbance of those who love a tranquil life, a political turmoil such as we have had no experience of since the time of the Chartists. In 1879, during Mr. Gladstone's passionate pilgrimage to Midlothian, the general excitement was not comparable to that aroused by Mr. Chamberlain. We have considered it a duty in our pages to abstain rigorously from supporting

either one side or the other. This is not a political journal, and in any case the controversy is so involved, and the essential facts are so difficult to eliminate from the irrelevant and unnecessary, that dogmatism seems to be out of place altogether, especially as the classes in whom we are more immediately interested do not stand to benefit either way. Free Trade has certainly injured the agricultural industry in so far that it has kept prices extremely low, but, on the other hand, no one has mooted a scheme of Protection sufficiently large to hold out a prospect of better times for the agriculturists. Thus the interest attaching to the question has become extraneous, and indeed the prospect is that in future Protection and Free Trade will be in England exactly what they are in the policy of the United States of America.

If we look away from home politics, there has been nothing of a very disturbing nature. South Africa, despite the little outcries that are inseparable from the settlement of a conquered country, has been steadily working out its own salvation, and its prospect for the future is the rosier imaginable. No one could put a limit to its resources, not only in the way of minerals, but, what is of more lasting importance, as a producer of food. It only requires a little patience on the part of those engaged in the practical work of developing it, and some tact and forbearance on the part of those who are guiding its policy, to secure for this vast continent a rich and glorious future. For the moment it has seemed that Canada has easily assumed a first place among the over-sea dominions of the King, but it is quite clear that at no distant date South Africa promises to become a rival to it. In other parts of the Empire there has been an absence of trouble that contrasts pleasantly with the wars and rumours of wars to which we had become accustomed of recent years. Historians of the future may very probably tax their brains to understand how a concern so gigantic as the British Empire worked so smoothly. We, who are in the heart of it and alive to every little jar, find it difficult to achieve the mental detachment which would place it and the events connected with it in their true perspective, but in no Empire of the past has there been anything like the agreement or absence of serious quarrels that exist in ours. When we talk so glibly about the Persian Empire, and the Greek Empire, and the Roman Empire having broken up, and that our Empire must, by some fatality, follow, we do not quite take into consideration the changes that have occurred. Those earlier civilisations were all far in front of the great body of mankind. Our strength is that the whole human race has been advancing simultaneously, and that we are not so much in front of the others as were the great Empires of the past.

Abroad there have been many clouds but no great storm, though acute observers see many symptoms to cause apprehension. They believe that coming events are already casting their shadows before. Nearly all of the world's great movements have come from the East, and it is there once more that we seem to notice the heaving that precedes the earthquake. In the Near East the unspeakable Turk has been on the verge of unloosing the dogs of war, and in the Far East the rivalry between Russia and Japan has assumed a very threatening aspect. It is no secret that the population of the younger nation is eager for fight. The expansion of Japan, its freedom, and its future, seem to depend on its being able not only to hold its own against Russia, but to do something towards turning the flowing tide of that aggressive and expanding nation. The Japs no doubt will have to play the game with their very existence on the table as a counter, and he would indeed be a rash prophet who attempted to forecast the result. Yet there are moments in the life of a nation, as there are in that of the individual, when he who would win his game must risk his all to do so, and if he have not courage enough for that critical moment he is relegated to the jog-trot crowd. So if Japan cannot or dare not assert itself it is evident that it will quickly lose the advantage gained by its modern progress. In Europe peace has happily reigned. How long it will continue to do so is a subject of idle speculation, as it is no longer racial antipathy and personal ambition, but commercial rivalry, that determines the attitude of nations. But "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." What Fate holds in her lap she carefully conceals. The events that are likely to fly from her in 1904 are as difficult to guess at as Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy was at this time last year. At the moment of writing the outlook is very black indeed, and the rumour is persistent that the latest answer of Japan to Russia is nothing more nor less than an ultimatum, and that war has already been decided upon.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of Mrs. Farquhar, the eldest daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Seymour Corkran, who was married last week to Mr. Walter Fitzroy Farquhar, the only son of the late Mr. Walter Farquhar and the Hon. Mrs. Farquhar.



QUEEN ALEXANDRA when she performs a charity, usually makes a choice that may be described by a much-abused word as exquisite. Her latest considerable donation is to a fund for providing Christmas entertainment for the sandwichmen of London. There can scarcely be any other class of workers who stand more in need of good cheer at this season of the year. Their wages are low, and we may assume that most of them are describable as broken men before they come to this stage. In earning their living they drag the dreary streets in all sorts of weather, and between those two boards form as piteous a spectacle as is conceivable. It was a happy inspiration, that of providing a good dinner for them, and Queen Alexandra has shown her customary discernment in choosing it for support.

It is satisfactory to know that the Emperor of Germany, at the centenary of three Hanoverian regiments, was able to address the troops in a "very loud voice." But if he has nothing more to congratulate them upon than on saving the English army at the battle of Waterloo, there could not be much body in his compliments. The fight has been fought over again so often that we cannot enter upon it here, but that Blücher saved Wellington is one of those legends which may be good enough for the soldiers of the Kaiser, but will not be accepted seriously by the rest of Europe. Altogether, the address was couched in a "big bow-wow" style that has long gone out of fashion in this country. "May it be as stainless, as bright, and as fair as the past" reads more like the peroration of a third-rate poet trying to speak prose than of a responsible and sober-minded ruler addressing his military subjects.

Every successive year that brings a mild and frostless Christmastide helps, no doubt, to strengthen the notion that these "green Christmases" have been getting common of recent years, and that a generation or two ago a Christmas Day sparkling with snow or hoar-frost was not the exception, but the rule. As a matter of fact, these complaints of the decadence of modern Christmas weather have very little real foundation, and are most probably simply due to that happy human faculty, which is found in almost everyone, of remembering what was pleasantest in the past, and forgetting most of what was dull or dreary. Wintry surroundings are required by all the sentiment and tradition of Christmas-time to give it a picturesque completeness, and we dwell, when looking backward, on the bright and frosty Christmases, and forget all about the dull ones. That hard weather at Christmas was certainly no commoner, speaking generally in the eighteenth century than it seems likely to be in the twentieth, may be easily seen by anyone who takes the trouble to glance at the weather records noted down for a long series of years by White of Selborne. The "old-fashioned Christmas" had certainly ceased to be the general rule as long ago as the days when George III. was King.

Yet there is often great beauty, though not the traditional Christmas beauty, about these mild midwinter days. In the woods the fallen leaves are all packed smoothly together into deep drifts or an even-felted carpet, and the scene is filled with a sense of orderliness and peace which marks this dark and restful period of the year, between the destruction and riot of the autumn months and the stirring of the earliest life in spring. When a gleam or two of sunshine break through in the heart of the day, it lights up the warm russet of the bracken and withered oak-scrub and the burnished green of the hollies into a delicate harmony of colour which is quite as beautiful in its way as all the foliage of June. The thrushes, too, which were silent all through late summer and autumn, have now begun to sing again, prophetic of coming spring. This is not the scenery of the Christmas cards, but it is certainly not less characteristic of our English Christmas, either in the present or the past.

Mrs. Steuart Erskine writes to us *apropos* of the review of "Lady Diana Beauclerk," which appeared in a recent issue, that since the publication of her book two or three interesting discoveries have been made in connection with Lady Di. A large canvas 16ft. long, on which a lake and a castle seen from a verandah are painted, has been found at Woolbeding, which once belonged to her brother, Lord Robert Spencer. Mrs. Steuart Erskine has also heard from Mr. Mortlock that he has a pair of jardinières painted and signed by Lady Diana Beauclerk in his private collection. Perhaps the publication of these facts may help towards the unearthing of more of Lady Di's work, for it is remarkable that one who painted so much and who was so popular in her time should have left so little behind.

According to the monthly memorandum of the Labour Department of the Board of Trade it seems there has been a slight, but not at all alarming, decrease of employment during the last few weeks. The number of those out of work is 6.0 per cent. as compared with 5.8 per cent. in October. These figures are, of course, taken from the returns of the Trades Unions, and may be accepted as fairly applicable to the whole of the country. The only difficulty about them is that the movement is not in the opposite direction, because the growth of exports and imports during the present year would naturally have led one to expect a great increase in employment. On the other hand, we must not forget the weather. There are various works that cannot be carried on during excessive rain, and the pouring wet days of November cannot fail to have caused an addition to the percentage of people out of work.

If the romantic imagination possessed by many journalists belonged to writers of fiction, the literature of to-day would be a great deal more readable. For example, last week there was published a most realistic and circumstantial account of a treasure found in the Vatican. It was seriously explained that the old Pope when he had nothing else to do had been accustomed to throw a million or so into a corner of his cupboard, and it seemed that his successor had come into untold wealth. Not only had great treasure been found, but hopes were held out that still more would follow. The person most concerned in this story, however, gives a very different version of it. On being congratulated on his accession to such great wealth, he smiled, and said he wished the story were true, but, unfortunately, almost the exact contrary was the case. The patrimony of the Holy See is not sufficient to meet the expenditure, and the Pope, as a matter of fact, is dependent on the offerings of Roman Catholics. After the late Pope's death, the sum of £32,000 was found in his apartments, and that appears to be the only foundation for this circumstantial story of millions.

Mr. C. F. Dowsett has sent us an interesting little book he has written to show that a good speculation at the moment is the purchase of English acres. Those who remember the formidable volume that he got up in 1892 will recognise that he is something of an authority on the subject. It seems in every way probable that English land will go on rising in value for many years now that it has taken a turn. The attempt to form garden cities may or may not be impracticable, but many factory owners, printers, and other industrialists of that kind, have found it advisable to transfer their work from the town to the country, and of course the advantages to the artisan are too numerous and obvious to need mention. He is able to rent his cottage much more cheaply in the country, and he can also have the advantage of a fairly good-sized garden. Indirectly this means to him cheaper food and more of it; directly, it conduces to his comfort and health and general well-being. The more these facts are recognised the more likely is land to be enhanced in value.

It appears that the Psychical Society is about to have its tenets subjected to a very drastic test. The late Mr. Frederick Myers, before dying, promised that if there was any possibility of doing so he would send a communication from where he was going to this material world. So far we understand that no direct message has been received, although Sir Oliver Lodge holds that some automatic writing that has come to the society may have been a communication from the departed member. On such a serious matter we do not like to be flippant, but the case reminds us of the story of Mr. Blackburne, the chess player, at Mr. Gastineau's garden party. On that occasion the spirit of the brilliant Paul Morphy was called up, but it did not reply when Mr. Blackburne asked what was the proper answer to Black's sixth move in the Evans Gambit.

Those who know will somewhat regret that Dr. Bell, the hermit of Hainault, has been in trouble. For years past he has

lived in the forest without any covering, and is a perfectly harmless old man, who is much thought of by the surrounding peasantry on account of his medicine lore. We believe that to be quite innocent, too, as he is really learned in simples. He keeps, and long has kept, two dogs beside the bower where he lives, and for this he was brought before the Kadi on Saturday, and was fined 10s. and 4s. costs for not having a licence. It is true that the magistrate charitably gave him credit till over Christmas to pay this, and we suppose, for the sake of example, it was necessary to impose a fine, but this is really a very exceptional case, and we trust that the old man will not be subjected to any hardship at this genial season of the year.

By the death of Mr. Gage Earle Freeman, at the advanced age of eighty-three, the world loses one of the keenest and most successful falconers who ever flew a hawk in this country. The origin of his passion for this ancient and noble sport has been told by him in a charming little book, "How I Became a Falconer." For, fortunately for his friends and the public at large, Mr. Freeman was not only a sportsman in the truest sense of the word, but also wielded the pen of a ready writer, and possessed to an extraordinary degree the power of communicating to his readers a part of the enthusiasm which he himself felt in exercising dominion over the fowls of the air. Consequently, by his example and his writings he undoubtedly did more than anyone else to keep alive English falconry in its darkest days, half a century ago.

On the death of the great Lord Derby the free leave which Mr. Freeman had hitherto enjoyed of hawking over the country near his home was revoked, and he was compelled, to his great regret, to relinquish, for all practical purposes, his favourite sport. He stayed on, nevertheless, for some twenty years at Wild Boar Clough, until in 1889 he accepted from Lord Lonsdale the Vicarage of Askham, situated in a beautiful spot just outside the gates of Lowther Castle. Here he occupied some of his leisure time in writing verses, for which he had always had a talent, and in making friends with the wild squirrels, which became, under his tuition, so tame that they would run into the room through the open window, and climb up upon his arms and shoulders in search of nuts. He took to the last a keen interest in falconry, and read with pleasure the accounts of campaigns conducted by others, many of whom had learnt most of what they knew from his books.

In our correspondence columns recently many interesting cases have been adduced of albinism in birds, and of white feathers appearing. Mr. Digby Pigott supplements these accounts with an interesting description of a pair of white black-birds that have now settled in Hyde Park. The shrubberies near Rotten Row are a favourite haunt of theirs, more particularly those on the south side and the bushy island in the Serpentine. As Mr. Pigott points out, it is easy to account for albinism, that is, an absolutely white colour accompanied by pink eyes, these effects being produced by an absence of colouring matter; but the increase in the number of birds with white feathers is more difficult to explain. Perhaps it is only because attention is directed to it that we think there is an increase at all. Here we have to go by impressions, not by actual facts. The colours in the feathers of birds have, of course, been produced by long generations of breeding, but that they were not always fixed would appear to be obvious from the case of the ruff and the reeve, which vary like domestic fowls. The appearance of feathers not in accordance with the ordinary plumage of the bird is, of course, due to casting back.

The bullfinch is one of the birds which seem to be increasing in Ireland, and that, too, in the face of the persecution it suffers from gardeners for its attacks on their fruit trees. It is a pity that this pretty bird should have such a bad habit of picking the fruit buds—especially those of the currant bushes—and so bringing down the wrath of the gardeners upon it. A pair will ruin a bush in a very few minutes, and this is the reason they are shot down so ruthlessly, and the wonder is that the species is not wiped out, particularly as these birds are now "fashionable" for ladies' hats. Perhaps the bullfinch is looked upon as being rare because he sticks so closely to a hedge or to the bushes. A pair of these birds will make their way along a hedge, only flitting out for a second or so at a time; so if it were not for the call-note, "Hoop! hoop! hoop!" its presence would not be suspected at all. The bullfinch is said to be particularly liable to melanism, especially when fed on hempseed in confinement.

During the past five weeks three pairs of waxwings have been killed in different parts of the British Islands. Somewhat strangely, the earliest records of capture hail from Ireland, one (a female) having been killed on the 12th, and another (a male) on November 19th. The remaining birds were obtained in England. Of these, a pair were taken in a net near Ramsgate

during the second week in December, and one of these, dying almost immediately, was sent to the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. The last pair were shot near Middlesbrough, Yorkshire, on December 18th. It may well be that these are stragglers belonging to a much larger body, which has been driven to our islands by stress of weather. But this point, of course, cannot be determined till the winter is over. Like Pallas's sand-grouse, it may be remembered, these beautiful birds occasionally invade our islands in large numbers, the last of such visitations of any importance occurring during the winter of 1872-73. In Ireland the waxwing is much more rarely obtained, only fifty examples having been recorded therefrom, and these have nearly all been killed on the east and north of the island. The two birds just obtained add two new localities to the list of occurrences, one having been shot near Belfast, the other in Kildare. Only once does the waxwing appear to have nested in England. This interesting event took place in a Douglas pine in the grounds of Sir Oswald Mosley at Rolleston Hall, Burton-on-Trent, in 1868.

The attempt to rob the mail by highwaymen at Cardiff reads like a bit out of the beginning of the nineteenth century instead of the twentieth. In the coaching period at this season of the year there was always a chance of the masked figure emerging from the shade of an umbrageous tree and holding a pistol to the coachman, crying, "Your money or your life!" Then there was fainting amongst the lady passengers and loss of colour even amongst the men, not all of whom were as brave in front of the highwayman as they had been when drinking hot punch at the bar of the previous stage. Goods were delivered up, the highwayman went off on his horse, one stage nearer a hanging, and the disconsolate passengers trundled on to their destination. But the Cardiff highwaymen do not seem to have acted with the picturesqueness demanded of their calling, especially at this season of the year. They rushed out from behind a hedge, made an attempt to rob the coach, and startled one of the horses, which, without allowing any time for dramatic developments, bolted off and left the thieves in the mud. Thus ended the first chapter in the twentieth century history of Jack Sheppard.

WINTRY BRIGHTON

1.—NOON.

The pale, increscent moon
Pearls in the blue mid-noon,
Silvers and pearls; the slow seas shoreward sway;
Foamless they bay the reach
Of the brown-purple beach,
And o'er the fresh-wet pebbles petrels play.

2.—NIGHT.

A mere sky-streak,
Ashen and stark and bleak,
Into the dull, dead distance dies the Down;
And, all aslant below,
Flame blots, like sparks aglow,
Flare in the stretch of cinder-cloud that blurs the town.

EMILY HUGHES.

Dr. Max Nordau has received a very emphatic lesson in the art of criticism. He lives in Paris, and has been holding forth against the Zionist movement with the same vigour that he directed some time ago against French and English decadence; but he probably did not take into account the amount of fanaticism that has been engendered by Mr. Zangwill's propaganda. He was attending a ball the other night given by the Zionist Society, and just before midnight, while he was talking to a friend in the alcove of a window, a man walked up and fired two shots at him, shouting at the same time, "Death to Max Nordau! No East Africa!" Fortunately, the eminent critic was missed, but a gay Parisian, who happened to be dancing at the time, was so seriously wounded that he had to be removed from the room. The assailant was at once arrested, and proved to be a Russian Jew, who had only arrived a few days before from Switzerland. On being questioned, he said he did not want to kill Max Nordau, but only to frighten him from continuing his opposition to the return of the Jews to Palestine. This seems to be an excellent example of the sweet reasonableness with which those of the Zionist persuasion are willing to discuss their business.

To the visitor who is not interested in farming, coming for the first time about this season of the year into Dorsetshire or any county where they have the horned Dorset sheep, it is an immense surprise to see lambs as big as grown sheep before Christmas. The lambing-time for these sheep is October, and the early lamb that they make for the market is valuable, though the mature mutton is not of the most delicate kind. Naturally, the expense in turnips is much heavier than in the case of sheep that have their lambs, which is equivalent to saying begin turnip-eating, two months or so later. The horned Dorset are a

great contrast in this respect to the Dorset Downs, as the smaller sheep are called that live on the upper downland. The latter conform to the more general mode of sheep life to which everyone, farmer or no farmer, is accustomed.

Perhaps nothing can be more convincing as evidence of the utter inadequacy of the weirs, in time of heavy flood, for the control of the Thames than the fact that the County Councils of the four counties chiefly affected by the recent flooding of the Thames Valley, have taken the occasion of the last meeting of the Thames Conservators to express their great satisfaction with the way in which the weirs have been managed. It is, of course, very good hearing that the officials of the Conservancy Board should be so well up to their work, which must have been exceptionally arduous in the exceptional circumstances, nor have we the slightest doubt that the encomiums of the County Councils were thoroughly well deserved. But the very fact that in spite of the excellent management the floods were so disastrous, only shows how futile was the faith of those who have been in the habit of saying, during the previous years of light rainfalls, that the flow of water in the Thames was now so well regulated that all fear of bad floods might be taken as groundless. A moderate flood we can doubtless deal with better than we could; but evidently when we get really a big water the best efforts are vain.

Travelling about in England, as a good many people are doing at the present time of year, on shooting visits and the like, it is inevitable that many earnest prayers for a continued frost must have gone up from those who are skaters, looking from the railway carriage windows and beholding the vast expanses of flood water. The ideal of the undergraduate skater's bliss is a frost

with Port Meadow and the Christ Church meadows flooded. But this year, what low-lying part of all England has one been able to see that has not been for more or less weeks under water? At the moment of writing the conditions seem to favour yet more flood, rather than any length of frost; but of this one never knows. If a frost should come, the opportunity of a prolonged and uninterrupted skating tour in England would be such as never perhaps has been known before.

One day last week the town of Aldeburgh in Suffolk celebrated what was termed a "sprat dinner." Probably the title need not be taken to mean that the sprat, in various forms suggested by the genius of the cook, was to figure all down the menu. We may rather take it that the small fish himself was content with the chief place in the fish course, and did not contest for a place in those that followed. The idea of the dinner was to do honour to this fish, which is one of the best that swims, with a regard, of course, for local interests in his fishing. It is proposed that the dinner shall be annual in the early winter, when the sprat is coming into season. The sprat is worthy of the honour done him, and worthy of far more honour than falls to his share. If the sprat was a rare fish, he would be very highly prized as an edible luxury. Being, as he is, so plentiful, when his shoals are about the coasts, that he is actually used at times to fertilise the fields—a base use for so delicate a person—he is so cheap that the best fishmongers deem him rather beneath the dignity of their notice, and he seldom appears "at the tables of the great." The great, however, make a vast mistake in not insisting on his appearance there, for he is the best little fish that swims in British waters, and not a whit inferior to the sardine. The only reservation with which he has to be praised is for his exceeding richness, that makes him a "sair saint" for the dyspeptic.

A CRY ON THE WIND.

*Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
Pity the great with love, time out of mind :
This is the song of the grey-haired wandering wind
Since Oisín's mother fled to the hill a spellbound hind.*

*Sorrow on love ! was the sob that rose in her throat,
I, that a woman was, now wear the wild fawn's coat :
This is to lift the heart to leap like a wave to the oar,
This is to see the heart flung back like foam on the shore.*

*Have not the hunters heard them, Oisín and she together
Like peewits crying on the wind where the world is sky and heather—
The peewits that wail to each other, rising and wheeling and falling
Till greyness of noon or darkness of dusk is full of a windy calling.*

*Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
Pity the great with love, time out of mind !*

*O sorrowful face of Deirdré seen on the hill !
Once I have seen you, once, beautiful, silent, still :
As a cloud that gathers her robe like drifted snow
You stood in the mountain-corrie, and dreamed on the world below.*

*Like a rising sound of the sea in woods in the heart of the night
I heard a noise as of hounds, and of spears and arrows in flight :
And a glory came like a flame and morning sprang to your eyes—
And the flame passed, and the vision, and I heard but the wind's sighs.*

*Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
Pity the great with love, time out of mind !*

*Last night I walked by the shore where the machar slopes :
I drowned my heart in the sea, I cast to the wind my hopes.
What is this thing so great that all the Children of Sorrow
Are weary each morn for night, and weary each night for the morrow !*

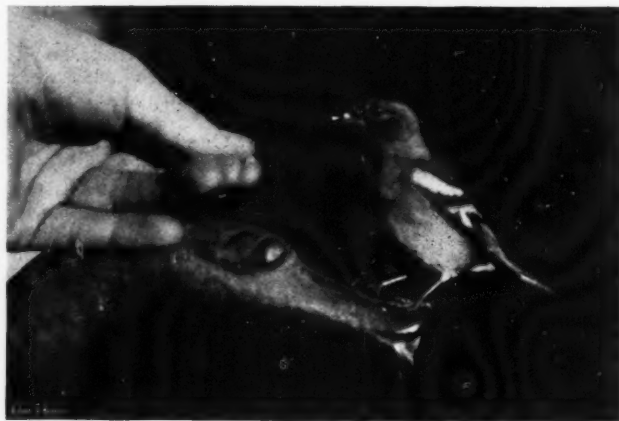
*Pity the great with love, they are deaf, they are blind :
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This is the song of the grey-haired wandering wind
Since Oisín's mother fled to the hill a spellbound hind.*

FIONA MACLEOD.

THE INITIAL FLIGHT of SMALL BIRDS.

HOW does a small bird take to flight? When robins, chaffinches, and tits are so tame in one's garden as to fly on to the hand for crumbs of nut, this question should not be too difficult for solution. I had been reading an article on "Flight" by Professor J. B. Pettigrew. "If anyone watches a bird," he writes, "rising from the ground or the water, he cannot fail to perceive that the head and body are slightly tilted upwards, and that the wings are made to descend with great vigour in a downward and forward direction." I closed the book and went into the garden to verify the professor's words by personal observation.

At the garden door I was met by a robin. It flew out from beneath the laurels on to the ball of my thumb, gulped down three or four bits of almond, and then, after giving me a knowing



HEN CHAFFINCH ALARMED.

case. The accompanying illustrations of hen chaffinch and robin are the results.

I interpret the photographs as follows: The hen chaffinch had just alighted on my hand, when the click and movement of the camera shutter alarmed it. A fortieth of a second passed before the bird moved. Wings and tail in the normal position of rest were thus imaged on the plate. During the rest of the exposure wings and tail were in motion, but the bird's legs were not even straightened. The uplifting of the wings and tail is clearly shown in the photograph, the whiteness of the under-feathers favouring their record on the plate. Before the downward stroke of the

wings began the plate was shut off from the light. In the photograph of the robin the high raising of the wings is manifest, but there seems to be no uplifting of the tail,



COLE-TIT WITH UPLIFTED TAIL.

look, it hopped, as it seemed to me, deliberately into the air, its wings expanding after it left my hand. I carefully watched robins, chaffinches, tits, and hedge-sparrows rise from the ground on the bench close beside me. They all, I said to myself, give a jump and then expand their wings.

Three of my friends who frequently feed the garden birds gave me their opinion. Two agreed with me, but the third thought that the birds jumped and raised their wings simultaneously. I made more observations from different points of view, and began to think that the third opinion was the right one. A happy thought! perhaps the camera will settle the question of the birds' initial flight.

A few days after there were some snatches of November sun. I sallied forth, therefore, expectant, with a quarter-plate long-bellows camera tucked under my right arm. A silk thread attached to the front of the camera, with a loop at the other end slipped down the middle finger of the left hand, ensured the focus at 15½ in. in front of the lens. I made four snap-shots of chaffinches and robins eating on my hand, giving 1-20sec. exposure with full aperture f11. In two the birds seemed to fly almost simultaneously with the release of the shutter. Development puzzled me. One plate was fogged. Another contained hand and wrist, but only half a bird. Two plates were promising, but in them it looked as though the birds had not moved at all. After the hypobath I was surprised to find that there was motion shown on the plates, but motion of the wings and tail, with absolutely none of head, body, or legs in either



FROM THE END OF THE GARDEN SEAT.

rather signs of its depression. As in the first photograph, there is not the faintest trace of any spring from the legs. The robin is almost squatting on the end of the fingers. In both photographs the raising of the head and body that I had been led to expect by my reading was manifestly absent.

A few days later I managed to get similar photographs of a cole-tit, also securing another of a chaffinch flying off the end of a garden bench. I was less fortunate with tontits. They came on the hand readily enough, but not in a position that was favourable for illustrating their initial flight. The cole-tit's photographs show the movements of the wings lifted so high as to shield the back of the head. In one photograph there is a distinct upward movement of the tail. Even where the tit is stooping down for a morsel of nut there is no raising of the head or body accompanying the primary wing action. In the photograph where the cole-tit is gripping the ends of the middle fingers the position of the wings at rest is marked. In the companion photograph the wings are shown to have been somewhat raised at the beginning of the exposure.

Is it a too hasty conclusion to draw from these photographs that the first action of a small bird about to fly is to raise its wings to their full height, and that this action is complete before there is any movement of head, body, or legs? An expansion and further movement of the tail accompanies the wing elevation, but why raised in one case and depressed in another is not clear to me. Perhaps



ROBIN BEFORE HIS SPRING.

the tail is depressed when the bird wishes to fly in the opposite direction to the one in which it is facing. The lowering of the tail would tend to check the forward movement given by the first stroke of the wings. On the other hand, it looks as though the chaffinch of the first photograph had assisted the lifting power of the wings by a corresponding up and down stroke of the tail. It has been suggested to me that the reason the birds do not jump whilst they raise their wings is that such a movement would increase the resistance of the air on the outer surface of the wings, and would thus retard their elevation.

The writer once found a couple of swifts clinging to one another on the asphalt floor of a racquet-court, open at one end. Each was trying to use the other as a *point de départ*; but neither was altruistic enough to allow the other to gain the security of the upper air, itself remaining behind. Haply they had visions of a cat that at times visited the racquet-court, and used to look up wistfully at the swifts disappearing into their nests under the roof-beams. I watched the struggle with interest for a few

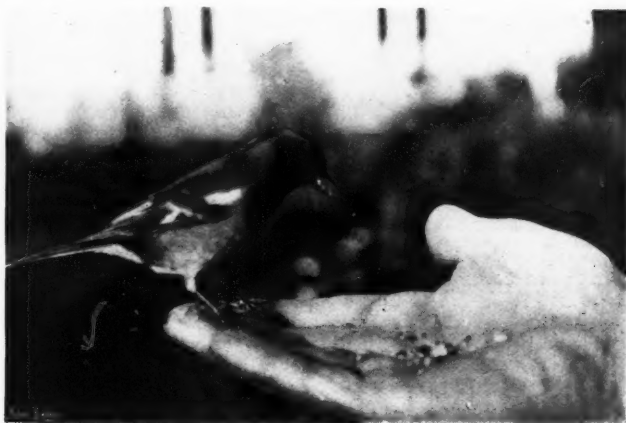


HEN CHAFFINCH, WINGS IN ACTION.

seconds, and then gently raised the birds on to my hand. Immediately they were up, out, and away into the summer air. As is well known, the shortness of their legs had prevented them flying off the level ground. They, too, as the birds of my photographs, start their flight by the action of the wings, without any previous spring off.

Since writing the above I have secured a perfect photograph of a cock chaffinch flying off the end of a bench with a crumb of nut in its beak. The details of the raised wing feathers are clearly shown, the bird remaining in the crouched attitude it was in the moment before it began its flight. It had picked up the nut off the bench immediately below its beak, stretching forward for it rather than approach nearer to my hand. The bird had actually left the bench before the exposure was quite complete. There is a faint white line of $\frac{1}{4}$ in. in length on the print, traced backwards and upwards from the bit of walnut the bird had secured. This shows that the initial movement of the head in flight was upwards, with a slight curve backwards, the bird turning in the air as soon as it was quite clear of the bench.

But do not the small birds, it may be asked, use their legs at all in starting their flight? Is there no spring even after the wings are raised? As far as I can gather from close observation, the birds certainly give a spring at times, but not always accompanying the first downward stroke of the wings. When a bird flies off the hand, the additional pressure of the spring at the moment of flight is sometimes felt, but not always. Some



HEN CHAFFINCH JUST ALIGHTED.



COLE-TIT WITH WINGS ABOVE HIS HEAD.

of my readers may have come suddenly on a thrush or blackbird sitting on its eggs. The bird flies off its nest with a whirl of its wings, but none of the eggs is ever found broken. In this case, certainly, the initial flight is caused entirely by the wings.

A last word on the illustrations. Do they not suggest a new meaning—a meaning that will find favour with bird-lovers rather than with lovers of birds—to the well-worn adage, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush"? B. BUTLER.

FROM THE FARMS.

THE INCUBATOR.

IN their series of "Rural Handbooks" Messrs. Dawbarn and Ward have just issued an excellent little pamphlet on the incubation and rearing of fowls by H. Francklin. The writer differs from many others in going into the principles of the craft and working them out from the beginning. The artificial incubation of eggs is not only so old as to have been in practice in China and Egypt thousands of years ago, but it occurs in Nature itself. The ostrich lays her eggs, and leaves them to be hatched by the sun's rays; and the mound birds of the Southern Hemisphere lay their eggs in heaps of earth and leaves, which, heated by the sun and the fermentation, form a



CROUCHING WITH FLUTTERING WINGS.

natural hatching apparatus, from which the young emerge fully feathered and capable of looking after themselves. In working an incubator the principal thing is to study and follow the actions of the natural mother. The hen, when she wishes to make a nest, seeks a very quiet spot and builds on the ground, lining the structure with dry grass. She keeps laying eggs for about twenty days, and each time that she lays one sits for a certain time on the others, the warmth from her body probably revivifying the germs in the eggs. When done laying she becomes broody, that is to say, the instinct to sit grows strong within her, and the organ of incubation "develops a network of superficial veins through which the warm blood courses in near contact with the eggs, and brings them to a temperature of about 101 deg." As time goes on, the feathers on her abdomen fall off, and the warm flesh is brought into contact with the eggs, thus increasing the heat as they approach the time of hatching. Then the hen, during her broody period, rises periodically from the nest, and goes off in search of food. Often she returns wet with dew, thus bringing a certain dampness to the eggs, which have had an airing during her absence. In settling down again, too, she turns and readjusts the eggs, so that the heat is evenly distributed. In working an incubator these facts of natural

history ought always to be kept in mind. How to do so will be found by consulting the pamphlet; and as an interesting example of our author's method, we take the liberty of quoting from it his memoranda about brooding and rearing:

"Chicks require their first feed twenty-four hours after hatching. Feed little and often at first; do not neglect grit nor a constant change of water, which should have the chill taken off in cold weather; green food is essential.

"Granulated peat-moss is the best covering for floors; dry sand comes next. A little chaff thrown down in the feeding quarters will keep the chicks busy and give healthy exercise.

"Hover curtains will not harbour insects if slightly impregnated with eucalyptus.

"Don't overheat; don't overcrowd nor be afraid of a little ventilation; chickens require hardening, not coddling.

"Air and sun the brooder chamber daily.

"The management of the brooder lamp is as important as that of the incubator.

"In hot-water brooders, the tank must be periodically replenished with hot water.

"See that baby chicks learn their way to the brooder.

"When the foster-mother is relieved of its tenants it must have first a good airing and sunning, and afterwards a thorough cleansing, as advised under 'Houses and Appliances,' before it is used again."

EARLY STOCK.

Although many kinds of work are at a standstill just now, there are several things that require close attention in midwinter.

Ewes are arriving at a very critical period, and especially in pedigree flocks require much care if they are to do well in the lambing season. The first litters of pigs have already appeared, and considering the snaps of cold to which we are liable even in a mild winter, it is very essential to have the younglings well sheltered, and yet provided with space for exercise, as they are the liveliest little creatures in the world. Drains in a season of such excessive moisture require to be carefully attended to, as cropping is quite out of the question unless the water can be run off somehow. The moisture has caused an abnormal development in the number of slugs, and these should be kept down as much as possible at this season, especially in pasture-land. On arable land the use of artificial manures generally proves fatal to them.

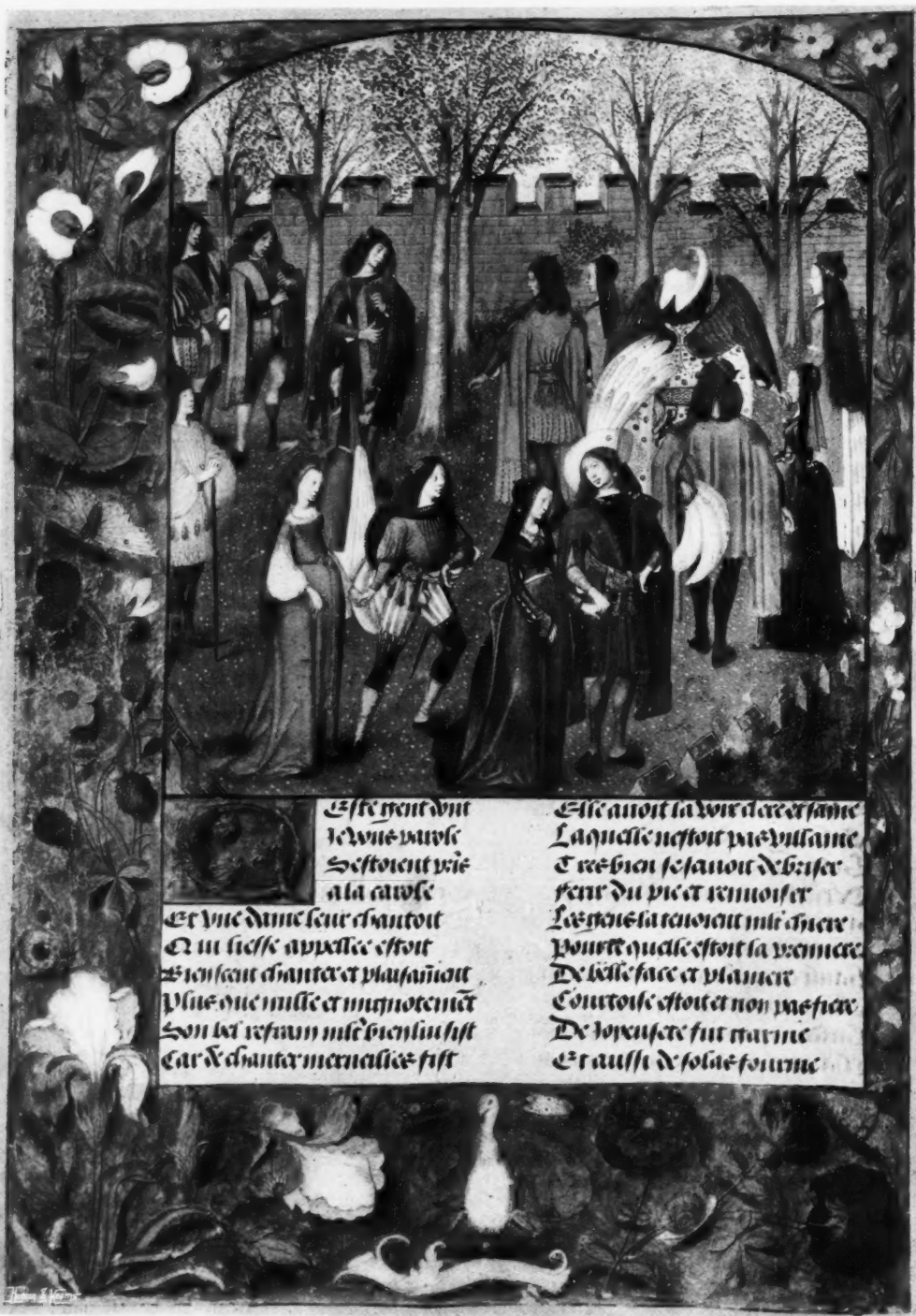
THE MEDIÆVAL GARDEN, AS PICTURED IN THE "ROMAN DE LA ROSE."

WHAT is the idea which at present leaps to the eye of imagination when the word "garden"—that "Yard touched with emotion or poetry," as it has been elsewhere defined—strikes our ear? Is it not an eclectic and

historical olla-podrida of various types—the grand horizontal type of Versailles, the terraced and statued garden of the Italian Palazzo, the more lowly examples of the manor, villa, or cottage garden, tempered and modified by the modern park—the so-called landscape garden, which, though it has foisted its name upon the designer of every kind of garden, is really not a garden at all, but an intrusion of the country into the domain of the garden, or an impossible attempt to imitate artistically the whole of Nature, or at least the landscape portion of it, within a narrow compass?

Well, the true idea or essence of a mediæval garden, as mirrored in the "Roman of the Rose" (to use Chaucer's form of its title), differs from all these types in being primarily the union of a garden with a fortification; a pleasance within a fortress. Not only was it, in Solomon's phrase, enclosed or embraced like a "sister or spouse," but it was walled, machicolated, crenellated, or embattled, turreted, draw-bridged, portcullised, and posterned. Hardly ever, I think, will you find in mediæval literature or art a true garden of the Middle Ages which does not satisfy the sternest conditions of military defence as understood and practised in those days. The garden represents the ideals and relaxations of peace amid the realities of war, where the favourite image for the colour of the rose was drawn from the human blood that often sank into and nourished its roots.

The famous mediæval "Romance of the Rose" is an allegorical poem begun in the thirteenth century by Guillaume de Loris, who wrote only 4,000 of its 22,000 octosyllabic verses of very poetical, naïve, and delicate quality. They relate a dream of the poet in his twentieth year, in which he sees within an orchard—the French word *verger*, so commonly employed at that date



"ENCLOSED WAS AND WALLED WELL,
WITH HIGH WALLS EMBATTLED."

as a synonym for *jardin*, shows that the very idea of a garden was still in the making—a rose, which he is forbidden to gather. Needless to say, the rose symbolises a maiden, only to be won after a thousand dangers and toils are successfully encompassed. The flower is guarded in the Garden of Pleasure by twenty formidable abstractions, personified by Danger, Chastity, Malice, Shame, Jealousy, Fear, Avarice, etc.; while the allies of the hero-dreamer are Bel-Accueil (Gracious Welcome), Doux-Regard (Sweet Looks), Pity, and Frankness.

This charming mediæval love-mirror Jean de Meung (surnamed Clopinel, or the Cripple) has blurred and obscured by 18,000 verses of a different temper and character, importing into its delicate simplicity, in the opinion of a competent critic, "a confused erudition, a brutal and cynical verve; and converting it into a contemporary encyclopædia, and a lasting satire." De Meung introduces such allegorical personages as Nature, Genius, Philosophy, Scholasticism, and Alchemy, and pours all his then new and fermenting wines of astronomy, natural history, physics, and politics into the old bottle of the *Trouvère*. An ancient chronicler describes him as "a solemn master and doctor in holy theology, a very perfunct philosopher, knowing all that is knowable by the human understanding." He was the author not only of the "Life and Epistles of Abélard and Héloïse," but of the "Mirror of Alchemy," and translator of the "Consolation of Boethius," and of the "De Arte Militari" of Vegetius—the Roman writer who served as the Vauban to the strategy and engineering of the Middle Ages—and in this fact is one of the links connecting the warlike surroundings with the peaceful chain of events in the Romance.

But it is time to turn from the authors to their work, a great portion of which has been translated for us most literally and poetically (no easy combination!) by old Dan Chaucer, and we shall draw from his "well of English undefiled," but rather sweetened by its babbling and sparkling springs of old Norman-French. The garden or orchard of the "Romaunt of the Rose"

"Enclosed was and walled well,
With high walles embatailled,"

but it was also

"Portraied without and weil entailed
With many riche portraitures,"

and later on we are told its design and contents in greater detail:

"The gardyn was by mesuryng
Right even and square in compassing,
It as long was as it was large,
Of fruyt hadde every tree his charge."

Those enumerated are pomgarnettys (pomegranates), nutmegs, almond trees, figs, dates, cloves, liquorice, ginger, grain of paradise, cinnamon and valerian, peaches, quinces, apples, medlars, plums, perys (pears), chestnuts, cherries, nuts, aleys, and bullaces.



"... NEVER WAS THER GARDYN OF SWICH PRYS
BUT IF IT WERE THE VERRY PARADYS."

The trees were set five or six fathoms from one another, and comprised laurels, pines, cypress and olive, elms, maples, oaks, ash, planes, yews, poplars, and limes, whose branches were interlaced and interwoven for shade.

"And every braunch in other knitte,
And fulle of greene leves sitte."

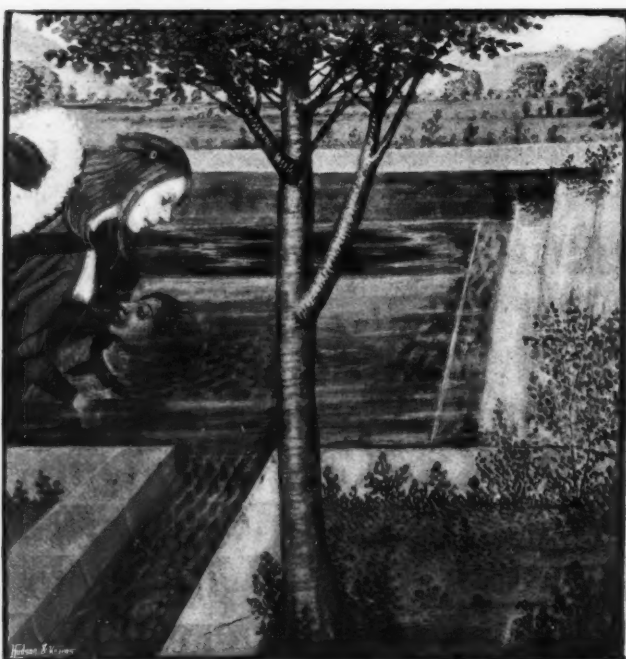
The garden was well-watered, both from wells, "faire in shadow," and by small streams conducted through conduits amongst the violets, periwinkles, and flowers "yellow, white, and read," with which the ground was "queynt" (quaint)—here used in its early sense of "decorated."

The indebtedness of the garden to the Orient for many of its beauties real or feigned (like the rhetorical flowers in the garden of old Abbot Neckham) is betrayed not only in the names of the fruits and spices—some of which could hardly have found their way into the West of Europe by the usual route of Constantinople, Venice, and Lyons so early as the date of the "Roman," although the names and memory of them had been preserved from the Crusades—but also in the words used to express their colours, such, for instance, as *sofloresindes* for indigo, or blue and *perse* for peach-coloured; and the Oriental *passegau* or parroquet is introduced nearly as often as the *kalandre* or lark.



*"My gardens sweet, enclosed with walles strong,
Embanked with benches to syll and take my rest:
The knotts so enknotted, it cannot be exprest,
With arbors and ayles so pleasaunt and so dulce."*

If we now turn for a moment from the particular instance to the general character or design of the mediæval garden, we find that its plan was commonly on two levels, leading from one to the other by a few brick or stone steps, and the first garden might be paved with stone. In the early Middle Ages, particularly in the twelfth century, M. Riat is of opinion that the garden was situated outside the ramparts, communicating with the castle by a false postern. The inner garden would be turfed, with a crocused or daisied lawn, and enclosed by palisades or a trellis-work of various patterns, such as we still employ, and sometimes the *hortus conclusus* would be surrounded by a three-sided low brick wall turfed to form a seat, and backed by a slightly higher wall. The various grades or low terraces of brick coped with stone may still be seen in the old Pond Garden at Hampton Court, not differing much from those in the illustration wherein Narcissus is mirroring himself in the water. In one corner would be found a Gothic fountain with gilt or bronze reservoir, and perhaps lions' heads spouting water into a marble-rimmed circular basin, which emptied itself through marble troughs or conduits to irrigate the rest of the garden. Sometimes a circular parterre was formed amid the *Pratella*, but as a rule



*This is the mirror perilous,
In which the proud Narcissus
Saw all his face faire and bright.*

the beds were small quadrangular patches, placed chequer-wise, (or with narrow sanded paths between), raised slightly above the level of the ground and edged with stone or brick, or else with low lattice-work, gilt or coloured. At the sides of the garden were tunnels or bowers (*berceaux*) or pergolas, square or arched, more familiar to us as the pleached or woven bowers and arbours of Shakespeare. Sometimes a labyrinth or House of Dædalus, which we now call a maze, intersected the flower borders, and the topiarian art, the legacy of old Rome, was exercised upon the trees and shrubs. An aviary, with the rainbow-hued birds of the East, was a frequent accompaniment, and peacocks, monkeys, dogs, and other tame animals amused the visitants of the garden.

I have sometimes wondered why it is that, with the genuine renaissance of taste and interest in the design and history of gardens, no one, so far as I am aware, has taken the really practical step of reproducing, on however small a scale, typical examples of historical styles. Nothing, I think, would tend more to the advancement of what may be pedantically called "Comparative Hortology," and I submit the proposition in all



MISERERE MEI DEO.

seriousness to the consideration of the Royal Horticultural Society, in the hope that it will bear in mind that its title implies a broader and more liberal policy than mere flower culture, however valuable that may be.

In the case of mediæval gardens, perhaps the absence of known original models has hitherto stood in the way of realising this idea, but if the one described by a French writer as seen by him some years since at Tafalla in Navarre still exists, we have a genuine type of the feudal garden of the fourteenth century. "On crossing the threshold," he writes, "we fancied ourselves entering the orchards of the 'Romance of the Rose.' The descriptions of Guillaume de Loris were no longer in our eyes the product of a romantic imagination, but a faithful picture of the pleasaunces, the *buen retiro*, as the Spaniards say, which the age of chivalry presented to us." Our readers will forgive us if in our delight at the importance of this discovery we quote somewhat more fully from our cicerone:

"Constructed in 1416, the period when this romance enjoyed all its prestige, these gardens are placed in the north-east corner of the little town, and backing upon its inner ramparts. On the south the palace buildings dominate them, on the west a special bastion separates them from the houses

of the city. The gardens, thus fortified, are divided into two enclosures of unequal extent. They do not form a perfect square like those of the 'Roman de la Rose,' but a parallelogram stretching from south to north, and represent approximately the area of the court and garden of the Palais-Royal at Paris. If we enter the court of the Palace at Tafalla, the wall is perpendicular and lofty, and perfectly adapted to receive fresco paintings. On this side are the marble margins of a well, two Gothic windows of the finest tracery, and the Ogival wicket leading into the garden, whose extent equals that of the Rosary of the Romance, which measured a hundred *toises* on each side. Opposite and all around arise crenellated ramparts six yards high, surmounted by seven square towers. . . . Near to this is an elegant pavilion, its staircase enclosed in an octagonal belfry, formed of four Ogival arcades, terminating in a pyramid adorned with flowers. The two gardens were connected by a covered passage ending in an Ogival gate. The second garden, following the same plan of square towers and crenellated ramparts, contains a summer-house at the north-east angle. You have only to restore the knots, borders, and flower-beds, the alleys of fruit trees, the fig and olive espaliers, to turn on the taps of the fountains, and to replant the rosaries, and you have a faithful reproduction of the gardens of the *Roman de la Rose*."

If ever the poem of Guillaume de Lorris resumes the immense popularity it enjoyed for two centuries, if the enthusiasts of mediævalism ever desire to reset its scenery, they would find a stage already erected in the old Gardens of Tafalla.

To which of us has not the same thought occurred, when in his wanderings he has struck upon an old garden laid out on the model of some greater example of the past? The present writer remembers the delight he experienced when, at Salzburg, he found himself in the Mirabellen-Garten, recalling, on a small scale, the famous open-air theatre of Versailles (now, alas! only to be found in Perelle's engravings), with its stage, its wings of foliage, and all its scenic appurtenances, although its *dramatis personæ* were no longer represented by courtiers of the grand century, but by a few children, whose gambols, happily for them, were not controlled by the rigid etiquette of the Court of "the Sun-King."

I have already alluded to the tunnels, *berceaux*, arbours, or pergolas running along the sides of the mediæval garden. These pergolas are very minutely described in an early little gardening book by Charles Estienne (one of the great printing family), called "De Re Hortensi Libellus"; and in view of its rarity, although it belongs to the Renaissance rather than the Middle Ages (my own copy bears date 1536), I think the following version of its Latin may interest those kephophils who rightly regard a pergola as one of the greatest, as it is one of the simplest, beauties of the gardens of all time:

"*Pergola une treille* (or trellis), so called, I imagine, from spreading or trailing. . . . Burdeus also says a pergola is the part of the house which stretches forward or overhangs; an eave or portico. Let us make two sorts of garden pergolas: the straight kind, which is usually made upon upright posts fixed into the ground, or ranged along the wall in a straight form, on which is planted rosemary, jasmine, and other creepers of the kind to be described presently; and the armoured or chamber pergola, which is woven (pleached) from salix, or juniper, to form shaded walks, and takes its name in our tongue from the children's cradles—a *berceau*—on which are trained vines and flexible plants, such as briony and gourds (*cucurbita*). Upon the straight pergolas are trained creepers of pleasant smell."

He then goes on to speak of the lesser pergolas or trellises with transverse palisades arranged as a border round the beds to keep off the fowls or domestic animals, and sometimes replaced by cut box in topiarian work:

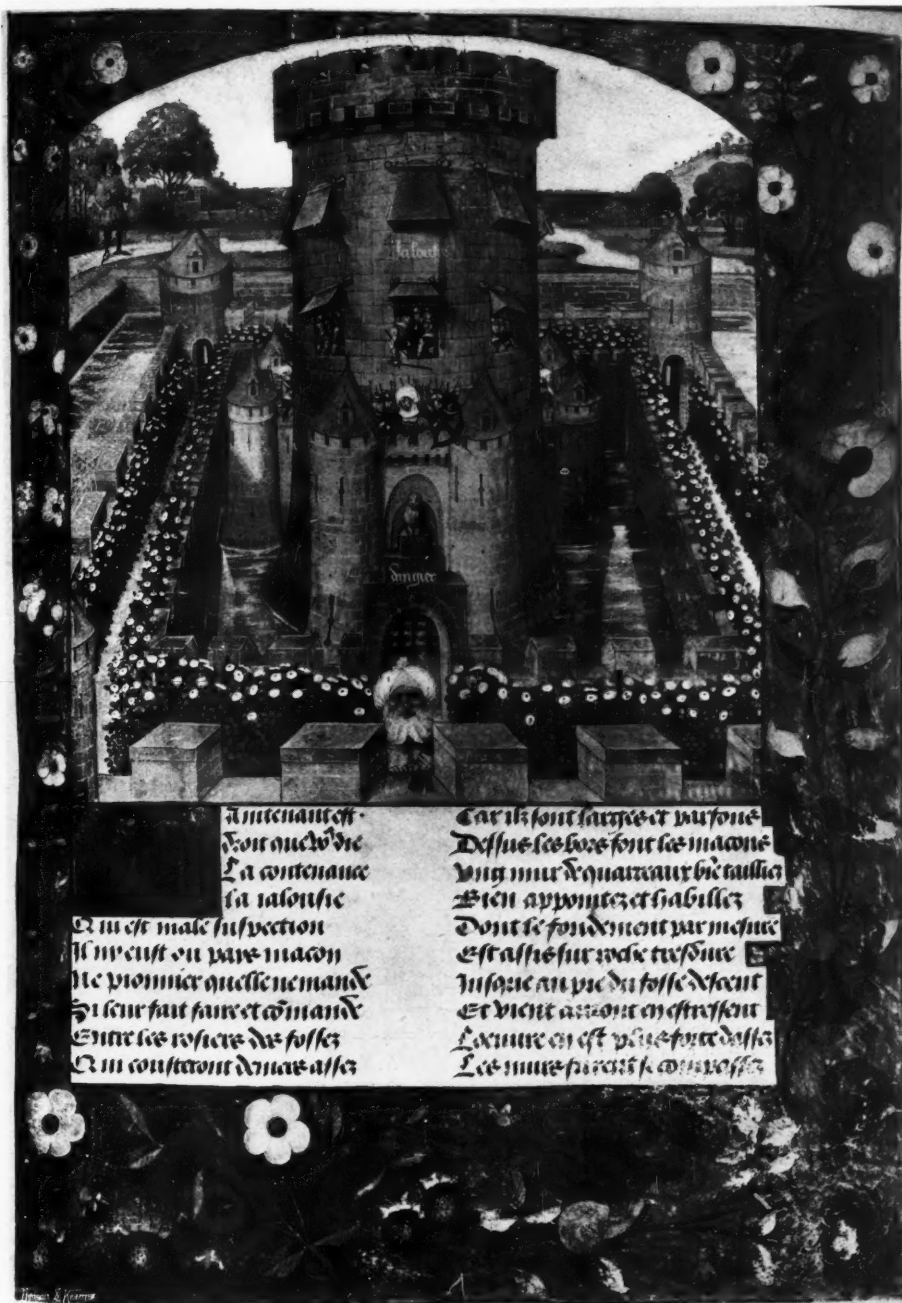
"Other shrubs and plants for the pergola are the Cydonian apple, also called granate (pomegranate), from the multitude of its grains or seeds, or *malus pumica*, rosemary, jasmine, rose; for every rose profits by cutting back and burning. Box (from the Pyrenees or the *Berecynthian* plain), juniper, cedar, and *sabina du Savini*."

For the covered or arboured pergola he recommends the trellis

or trailing vine, hops, gourds, and sweet peas (*Pois de Merveille*), first grown by the Cardinal of Paris.

For one more instance of a Middle-Age garden let us take M. Georges Riat's description of the Gothic garden figured in an MS. of the Arsenal Library in Paris, wherein Maugis and the beautiful Oriande are seated:

"The garden in the courtyard"—(notice that the word "courtil" (*cortillum*) still suggests its "yard" origin)—"is surrounded by a barrier of gilt lattice-work, broken on the right to allow passage to the fountain, composed of a basin decorated with oval apertures, resting on a short pillar, terminating in a small column spouting several jets, and crowned with a statuette. Within the lattice-work is a rectangular wall, forming three sides of a square"—(see illustration)—"and covered with turf, like that in the *Grimani Breviary*. On the wall are blue vases, the bases decorated with



THE MAGIC GARDEN.

scrolls and festoons, and containing carnations or shrubs, *taped* into three flat sections. At the foot of the wall are stretched turf benches, on which sit Maugis and the belle Oriande. Flowers strew the lawn; on the right is the castle, and at the back a crenellated wall flanked with turrets, and on the left another wall pierced with a pedimented gate, enclose the garden."

I have only space here for a few more notes on the mediæval garden. In a capitulary of Charlemagne, "De Villis Imperialibus," of the year 812, we find that he had gardens at Aix-la-Chapelle and Ingelheim; and from another we know the vegetables and fruit trees he decreed should be planted throughout his dominions. In the Chanson de Geste, *Auberi*, we see him in a great orchard with Roland and Oliver, seated upon white carpets, playing at Fables—the Elders at chess, "et les bacheliers à l'escrime."

In the Dominican Convent at Cologne, about 1245, Albert Magnus, the Universal Doctor, is said to have built the first hot-house, and summed up the results of his gardening essays in a great work, "De Vegetalibus." The good King René of Anjou (1409-80) had celebrated gardens at Angers, Beaugé, and Aix.

To harp once more upon the same string. What we now want is some enthusiastic individual or corporation, who will not be content to merely revive the literary and artistic references to the mediæval garden, but who will give us a real living revival of it, in its "habit as it lived," wherein we can walk, sit, and take the air, as our ancestors did before us. We have had many brick, stone, and stucco resurrections of old London and old Paris and old Edinburgh; why, I ask again, do none of our Botanical or Horticultural Societies give us once more a Palingenesia of Old Gardens in act and deed?

A. FORBES SIEVEKING.

IN THE GARDEN.

THE SCILLAS.

THE Scillas are an important race of spring and summer flowering bulbs with bright and interesting flowers. Two types are generally grown, the starry-flowered, of which *S. bifolia* is a familiar example, and the bell-flowered, well represented by our native Bluebell.

A third group is neither so popular nor so useful. This is the *S. peruviana*, which has broad leaves and a spreading inflorescence in summer. There are many Scillas quite unknown to gardeners that one could recommend as useful plants, and there are others that were introduced long ago that we ought to contrive to do without now that so many beautiful bulbs are available, particularly *S. autumnalis* and *S. italica*, both of which are of poor colouring and weedy. The native Bluebell enjoys, as we know, the half shade of the open copse rather than full sunshine, and probably many kindred species would appear to better advantage in open shrubberies, planted in Nature's own lavish way, than they do as tufts in the plant border. Most of the cheaper Scillas produce seeds so freely that one often regrets the need for destroying seedlings in cultivated soil, that would speedily clothe many an unsightly patch of worn turf beneath trees, and help to make bright and cheery spots in spring if they could have their own way. Rarities, of course, would have places selected for them on rockeries and elsewhere, but the majority of Scillas should be grown rather in colonies than separately. Even in border planting it is better to have a broad sowing of bulbs that would be satisfying in their rich colour display than a thin line or a series of little tufts.

S. amena.—This is the Star Hyacinth; it is too often confounded with the Siberian Squill, and there are many who regard the two names as synonymous. There is a resemblance between the two plants and a great colour distinction. The flowers of *S. amena* are royal purple or plum-coloured, and they appear late in spring. It is effective on rockeries when well massed.

S. autumnalis is a slender plant, with thin spikes of rosy lilac starry flowers, but it is not an effective garden plant. Its white form *alba* is choicer, and a neat plant to group on rockery slopes. Any soil suits it.

S. bifolia is a well-known little plant, and very charming in the mass. It grows well in any soil if it is not very heavy and wet. The flowers are deep ultramarine in colour, starry in outline, but wonderfully pretty when produced from short turf. *Alba*, its white form, is a refined little plant that everyone would appreciate when growing on a rockery slope. It does not increase fast, but is comparatively long-lived. It does not promise to be useful as a grass bulb, and it cannot well be naturalised, as seedlings revert to the type. *Carnea* is a poor little plant—a pallid weakly rosea of little garden worth; the colouring is a dull flesh tone. *Rosea* is a better plant, not wholly rose-coloured, but with a lilac tint. It is effective when planted in a setting of *Herniaria* or similar mossy plant. *Taurica* is a rich violet-coloured form, inexpensive, free of growth, and will prove more useful than the type; the colouring is better and more decided. These little Squills are among the first flowers of spring, and they are excellent rock plants that one would not care to be without.

S. chinensis (*Barnardia scilloides*) is a pretty but quite neglected autumn-flowering Scilla, producing spikes of rosy pink flowers, small individually, but closely arranged in a dense spike gin. high, and lasting well till quite late in the year. One could recommend it for rockeries and raised borders—it prefers a damp soil and a warm position.

S. hispanica (the Spanish Scilla), better known, perhaps, as *S. campanulata*, embraces in its forms some of the best May-flowering bulbs of its class. They are better adapted for border planting, for shrubberies, and for naturalising in the same way as the Bluebell, but in open, sunny places, where the latter would not appear so effective. The type plant is light blue in colour, very floriferous and vigorous, often throwing spikes 18 in. high in good cultivated soil. *Alba* is pretty, excellent in colonies in the plant border, but there is a larger form with very large bells. It is the white counterpart of *Excelsior*, and the spikes curve gracefully as in *S. patula*. *Atrocærulea* is a dark blue selection, differing only in its richer colouring from *S. hispanica*. *Excelsior* is a giant, and quite the best Squill for border planting; the colouring is not very distinct, but the large size of the bells and the enormous spikes are excellent features. This plant, treated like the common Hyacinth in pots, is worthy of extended use in conservatory decoration. It requires good culture to maintain its vigour. *Rubra* resembles the type, except in colour, which is a clear pale red; but the best of the reddish forms is *Rose Queen*, a delightful variety, still somewhat rare; the colouring is a pale rose, soft in shade and very clear, becoming silvery as the flower ages. It is none too vigorous, and its increase in a heavy soil is slow, but under more favourable conditions it would, doubtless, thrive better. It is an excellent plant of refined colouring, quite distinct from the many nondescript roses and reds that one finds in this family, which are so much overrated.

S. italica is a starry-flowered Scilla, blooming in late spring. Its flowers vary somewhat from lilac-purple to slate blue, the latter predominating. As now available the species is hardly worth garden room, but there are several shades in chance seedlings that one could welcome—notably, a pretty lavender-coloured form, and a turquoise blue, which, when available in quantity, so that they can be massed, will re-establish the popularity of this species. The better types hail from Cilicia. *Alba*, a rare white form, is one of the gems of the spring flora. The flowers are quite colourless and very dainty. These Squills require a warm slope and a thorough ripening in autumn, otherwise the bulbs decay at the disc.

S. festalis (the common Bluebell) has white, rose, and pink varieties. The bulb cannot be planted too deeply when establishing a colony. A depth of 8 in. may be accepted as the deepest one can plant with success; the spikes are much finer, and the yield of flowers and seeds is greater, than where barely covered, as one finds the bulbs in a natural state. One should always plant before the autumn rains occur.

S. hyacinthoides is a magnificent Squill of vigorous growth, resembling *S. peruviana* in its leafage, and producing long spikes of flowers 2 ft. high, the bells of which are contracted at the middle, very large, and coloured a rich gentian blue. It is a fine plant for border cultivation, and it may be naturalised in exceedingly good soils.

S. natalensis is a pale, yellow-flowered, strong-growing species, closely resembling *S. peruviana*. It has a spreading, pyramidal head, the lower flowers with long pedicels, so that the inflorescence appears flat with a cone-like centre. The colouring varies from cream to a soft straw yellow. A rare bulb, unfortunately too tender for outdoor culture save in very warm counties. It flowers with *S. peruviana* in early June.

S. patula, the nodding Squill, resembles our Bluebell, but the flowers appear to be tasselled owing to the drooping cluster of buds above the open blooms. The bells are lilac or lavender, and the segments are lined with blue. Rosy-tinted forms occur frequently, but they lack the soft, refined colour shades of the type. *S. patula* is an excellent border plant, quite easy to grow, and one of the best Squills for naturalising in sunny places where the soil is good. The flowers expand to the fullest extent, and they can hardly be called campanulate, but saucer-shaped.

S. peruviana, a well-known Scilla of pyramidal outline, is considered too tender for outdoor culture, but if planted 6 in. deep it will survive most winters. It makes considerable leaf-growth in autumn, and is often badly checked by frosts, but it generally manages to survive, and flowers freely. The spikes appear in early summer, and are blue, but vary in tint from a washed-out pale blue to a darker and more vivid colouring. The spikes often exceed 6 in. across, and the flowers are narrow-petalled and starry. *Alba* is a more refined form; it looks at its best when intermingled with the type. This Squill rests only for a few weeks, and early planting is necessary. July and August are the best months, but November planting is also successful, as the bulbs make a second "ring" of roots in that month.

S. pratensis is a starry-flowered plant of the *italica* type, but the inflorescence is larger, and more freely produced when the bulbs are fairly established, whilst the colouring is a really good blue.

S. sibirica, the well-known Siberian Squill, is one of the showiest of the spring-flowering group. The flowers are in short, slender spikes, of which several are produced, and they are widely bell-shaped or nearly flat. The appearance of the growths above ground is interesting to watch. The leaves are hooded at the tips, and the flowers do not appear in complete spikes, but tumble out of their prison of leaves one at a time. The greatest use for



*In time of love and jollity
That all things gynneth waxen gay.*



M. Emil Frechon.

THE CHRISTMAS GREETING.

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the Siberian Squill is in the rock garden and for naturalising on grassy slopes. Alba is a charming little bulb of garden origin, a pure white, but not quite so hardy and long-lived as the type; whilst lilacina is lavender-tinted. The Siberian Squill is not naturally variable, and there are no red or rose or pink forms, so far as we are aware. These Squills are charming when grown in pans for the Alpine house or for the decoration of apartments in spring. September and October are the best months for planting.

S. verna is a neat rock plant, pretty in the mass, but too small for general use. The flowers are starry, and deep lilac or blue-purple in colour. The effect in the mass is that of blue with a sheen of rosy lilac.

There are other species, but the foregoing represent the best of those that are worth growing.

SINGLE CHRYSANTHEMUMS.

The beautiful white and coloured single Chrysanthemums are increasing in favour, and even as late as this they are the most useful of all flowers for refined decorations, unlike the big and coarse show blooms, over which the labours of a year are willingly and wastefully spent. There has been a general lament that the monster blooms have rotted with the damp and dull weather of the late autumn, but such monstrosities plied with patent manures to force them as far as they will go have little stamina. An almost scientific process of air-giving is needful to preserve their freshness for a day.

AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS.

THAT Christmas is not what it once was is very easily demonstrable, and the chief reason can be put in a few words. Our forefathers had this great advantage over us, that the greater part of the year they lived most plainly and frugally. Even those who were esteemed the rich men of their day were content with plain fare at all but

exceptional times, and those who corresponded to the prosperous middle classes lived so plainly for the greater part of the year, that they looked forward to a feast as a rarity. But the people of our generation have prospered so amazingly, and have become so luxurious and self-indulgent in their habits, that a considerable number—and a number that is continually increasing—has nearly

every day of the week food as good as it can be had. If anyone takes the trouble to look through one of our fashionable restaurants at dinner-time he will be astonished at the apparently endless succession of visitors who, as a matter of course, have the best meal that the place can give. Now we are not saying that in any restaurant or eating-house perfection of cookery is to be found. Who wants that must now as ever go to the distinguished gourmet who has treated dining as the one fine art to which he might devote his genius and energy. But it is safe to say that at the homes of nineteen out of twenty of the guests at a fashionable dining-place the food to be had cannot be bettered. Thus, as far as good fare is concerned, Christmas holds no surprise for a great many of us; and if it be remembered how the praise of good eating enters into our Christmas literature, it will be realised how much has been lost. Roast beef and plum pudding and mince pies form a diet that the average digestion of to-day shrinks from. Then in the old Christmas songs we find that the guests solaced themselves with "October," or, at the most, with claret. Beer, however, was by far the commonest, especially among the Squire Westerns and the Parson Trullibers of old country life. Drinking then was largely a matter of quantity, and the two-bottle men and the three-bottle men and the four-bottle men could scarcely have been very careful about the quality of their drink. Fortunately, now, these habits have to a large extent passed away from English Society. Even the young Oxford or Cambridge man is not nearly so wild as his predecessors were twenty years ago. As often as not he may be seen regaling himself with some innocuous mineral water, or, at most, venturing into the dangers of a glass of sherry.



F. Parkinson.

FROZEN UP.

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F. Parkinson.

ICEBOUND.

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It is no longer good form to drink in the old fashion, and so this kind of jollity is also disappearing, and probably will be obsolete in another hundred years.

A curious circumstance has been pointed out quite recently. The importation of mistletoe this year is the smallest on record, and those who sell it say that the demand for a long time has been a diminishing one. Nothing could more pointedly show the decay of Christmas festivities. It means that there is less decoration, and perhaps also less of that innocent "daffing," as the Scotch people call it, for which the mistletoe served as an excuse. Such pictures as our contemporaries used to produce fifteen years ago, of the grandfather of the family being kissed under the mistletoe by all his fair daughters and nieces and grandchildren, would be utterly out of date now. It may be true of this form of enjoyment, as it is true of food, that the best is demanded all the year round, and that Christmas can never be better than the best. In point of fact, a really good Christmas party nowadays is precisely the same as a really good party at any other time of the year.

Another factor that must effect a great change in our Yuletide manners and customs is the motor-car. Somehow we cannot imagine people who go out in fur and leather to whirl through the country at lightning speed sitting down to spend Christmas

as, for example, Scott tells us he used to do. Imagination boggles at the picture of the modern, up-to-date heir "with roses in his shoes," choosing a village partner, or playing "post-and-pair." The modern butler, who is usually a prim, intelligent, well-dressed gentleman, would offer a still more striking contrast to the old blue-coated serving-man, who brought in the boar's head crested with bays and rosemary. The food that Scott mentions is the huge sirloin, with plum porridge, Christmas pie, and in Scotland savoury goose. Again, the amusements have entirely altered. The merry maskers may still exist, but it is only to make fun to the peasant. No longer would they dream of approaching the hall unless it were by a back way for the benefit of the kitchen girls. The romping games that an elder generation delighted in are no longer in favour, and their place is

supplied by music and dancing that is extremely proper and elegant and innocuous.

The truth is that no amusements are now considered specially suitable for Christmas. A golfer would never hesitate to go out with his clubs on that day or a sportsman to shoot, and nearly all the other outdoor recreations are indulged in just as they might be at an ordinary time. The total effect is to reduce the importance of the day. Perhaps one might philosophise further and say this, that as the effect of crowding people



F. Parkinson.

NEAR THE OLD BOATHOUSE.

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into towns is to make mere items of them, so the social effect is always towards uniformity and monotony. This must be exceedingly true of the immense hordes of town workmen. Each rises in the morning at the same hour as his neighbours, goes to work at the same hour, and leaves off at the same hour; drinks the same bad beer at the same kind of public-house; gets very nearly the same wages, and spends his Bank Holidays in the same way. If we were to judge from the actions of trades unions, we should say that that was the ideal of the workmen—that they should all have the same hours, the same wages, live in the same sort of house, and spend their money in the same way. The worst of it is that great movements generated in the populace always tend to mount upwards and infect the whole nation. Much of what we have gained by our modern institutions has been at the expense of that individuality which at critical times counts for more than anything else.

One thing alone seems to remain changeless—that is the changeability of the weather, and while the climate continues as it is a great many outdoor sports must still be the same. Skating is as little likely to go out of fashion as running or jumping. As an amusement it combines all the advantages incidental to exercise and fresh air with the gracefulness of dancing. One feature that would preserve it if all else failed is that a woman never looks more attractive and graceful than when on skates. The "roaring game" is more likely to extend to England from its native Scotland than to become obsolete. One obstacle is there to its popularity, and that is the paucity of hard weather that we have had during the last few years; but the frost will return, even as the rain did, and curlers and skaters will have their own again. An amusement which snow would quickly bring into popularity, since already many people are hankering after it, is the Scandinavian exercise of ski. There



F. Parkinson.

A HARD WINTER.

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is already a club in existence, and if the fates were propitious there would be many to take it up in the present year, for, of course, it is well known that we have in England several experts who have been forced to go abroad for practice.

BRITISH MAMMALS.

SIR HARRY JOHNSTON, the author of "British Mammals" (the Woburn Library of Natural History, edited by His Grace the Duke of Bedford), tells us that his book is an attempt to describe and illustrate the mammalian fauna of the British Islands, from the commencement of the Pleistocene period down to the present day. The word "attempt," as it appears above, suggests a modesty on the part of the author in relation to his very compendious and interesting book, for he has more than attempted to describe his subject; he has, his readers will allow, fully succeeded in doing so in the handsome volume under notice. The ducal editor, whose own knowledge of bird and animal life is extensive, and chiefly derived from his superb collection at Woburn, introduces the author, not that any introduction is necessary in his case, for there are few students of natural history who have not read his admirable work on "The Uganda Protectorate." The Duke writes: "Each subject treated in the Woburn series of natural history will be dealt with by a writer who has made it his special study. In this volume, therefore, as in all succeeding ones, the writer speaks for himself, and the editor has not attempted to impose his own opinions on those who have been asked to contribute to the series." From this it will be seen that the present work is the first of a series on birds and animals by competent authorities, and we congratulate the Duke of Bedford on the first volume of his Woburn Library of Natural History, and on the light duties that apparently fall to his lot as an editor. Sir Harry Johnston says in his preface that although a good deal of his time has been spent in Africa, he has, nevertheless, from his youth up, been a student of the British mammalia in all parts of the United Kingdom. He adds that his first interest in British beasts was no doubt prompted by their æsthetic aspect and their beauty of outline and colour, and that though he has since become entangled in the fascinations of comparative anatomy, the strongest attraction which beasts and birds still possess for him lies in the part they fill, or should fill, in British landscapes. His book would not have been worth the trouble of compiling had it merely dealt with the few well-known wild animals still lingering in Great Britain and Ireland, for they are exhaustively described in many standard works of modern issue. The author has, therefore, wisely included in his pages a full account of recently extinct British mammals, and he has at the same time expatiated in fascinating style on the many interesting problems concerning the origin and migration routes of the mammalian fauna which have inhabited our islands since the close of the Tertiary epoch.

Sir Harry approaches his subject as a true sportsman, as an artist, and as an enthusiast, and that he is one of the best living experts in field and closet natural history is well known. We cannot refrain from quoting the following sentence, as an



F. Parkinson.

A WINTER MORNING.

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example of the attributes already alluded to: "I would fain have described how the sabre-toothed tiger severed the spinal column of the megaceros deer with its trenchant tusks; how man, naked and unashamed, and armed with weapons which were poor as compared with the Congo pygmy, matched himself against the mammoth and caught the aurochs in a pitfall." The author, in musing mood, then proceeds: "He, instead, must twitter on the ferocity of the weasel, and relate anecdotes of park-fed beasts. There are lessons, however, to be learnt even from the nineteen varieties of the wood-mouse, and the violent amours of the mole." It is quite evident from this quotation that Sir Harry would be delighted if he could, for a space, be relegated to the period when all the fearsome beasts he describes, and even mourns the extinction of, roamed the woods and swamps of England, even though he were armed but with the spear and bow of those days, and his costume was composed of the skins of the animals he snared or slew.

From what we have written the reader must not suppose that our author's pages merely consist of pleasant gossip reading, for, though there is plenty of this kind of writing in his book, yet he treats in logical and scientific manner all the many animals he passes before us in orderly review. Though the word "mammal" may perhaps seem somewhat strange to the unscientific reader, we may point out that it is the most correct designation in English for the air-breathing, warm-blooded vertebrates which suckle their newly-born young. As Sir Harry, with much force and truth of argument, points out, the word "animal" applies not only to mammals, but also to every living creature which is not a vegetable. "Quadruped" is equally foolish, because reptiles, and, in a sense, birds, also possess four limbs, which are usually devoted to purposes of locomotion.

It is impossible, in this notice, to treat individually the chapters in the book. Suffice it to say that all British mammals now existent, or which have existed in our islands from the commencement of the Pleistocene period, are fully described, and in most cases illustrated, their habits, haunts, dimensions, together with their rarity or otherwise, and the dates of their extinction if they no longer exist, being given.

Let us turn to the wolf, for example. After a learned and interesting chapter on this animal, we read at its conclusion: "Wolves were not exterminated in England till the close of the fifteenth century, during the reign of Henry VII. Perhaps the last specimens lingered in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the forest of Savernake in Wiltshire. The last wolf was probably killed in Scotland about 1743, and in Ireland perhaps as late as 1766." If wolves were shot or trapped in Ireland as recently as the middle of the eighteenth century, it is indeed curious that not a skin or mask of one has been found, for such relics might naturally be supposed to exist in old country houses and museums, as do skins and heads of deer that were killed previously to the final extermination of Irish wolves, if, that is, these animals lived in Ireland as recently as Sir Harry Johnston surmises. We are interested to read that though the wild cat,

we mean the true wild cat, was co-existent in England with the mammoth, lion, reindeer, and hippopotamus, yet it was never known in Ireland, and is probably a relatively recent immigrant to Scotland, having gone northward with the wild cattle, red-deer, roe-deer, and wolf, owing to the gradual withdrawal of the ice from Scotland, and also owing to the attacks on wild beasts made by the increasing number of human inhabitants in South Britain. The author asserts that the wild cat lingered on in the wilder parts of Northern England, such as the Lake District, down to about the middle of the nineteenth century, and that he

is not quite certain even now whether it is absolutely extinct at the present time in North Wales. In our opinion the wild cat only exists in Scotland, and in small numbers, its chief haunts being in the vicinity of Glenmoriston.

One of the most interesting chapters in the book is that which describes our "marine carnivora." This sub-order of the carnivora includes sea-lions, walruses, and seals. We find the various seals admirably described and portrayed, and we consider more lucidly than in any other book on natural history we are acquainted with, their distribution, habits, colouration, and special anatomical points being very clearly put before us.

We have not space to comment on the many chapters we should like to allude to, such as those on the hare and rabbit, or the one on the beaver, though in relation to this former inhabitant of our streams and lakes, it is curious to note that the name of the town Beverley, in Yorkshire, is probably derived from "Beaver meadow," and that many other places in England show that they were associated with the beaver by the early English, as, for instance, Beveridge.

The chapters on deer of all kinds are among the best in the book, and the illustrations of the different species that inhabit our islands, or formerly did so, together with the drawings of their horns in various stages of growth, are excellent.

Near the conclusion of Sir Harry Johnston's work we arrive at the most important mammal of all, and this is, of course, "Homo," or man, a genus whose history is most cleverly traced from its earliest probable origin down to historic times. The white man, as Sir Harry rather amusingly writes, "is the commonest mammal in our islands at the present day, with the doubtful exception of the long-tailed field-mouse; and excepting the common mouse, the brown and the black rat, man is probably the most recently-arrived mammal in the British Islands."

In conclusion, we may say that the illustrations in the book,

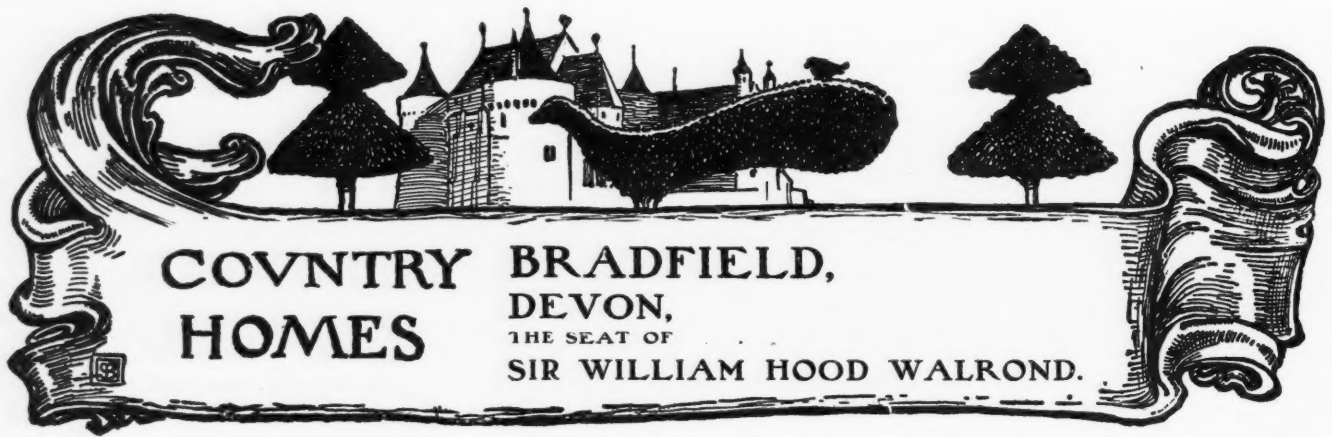
especially the sketches by its author in black and white, are, generally speaking, admirable, though we consider that a few of the large coloured plates are not only too vivid in their colouring, but also have too few shades of colour in them. In several instances the same colours, owing to the process with which the subjects are produced, are employed for colouring not only the animals, but also the backgrounds, trees, and foliage that surround them. The plate of fallow deer (page 308) is a marked example of this style of universal colouration.



F. Parkinson.

ARRESTED PROGRESS.

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IT is with no common pleasure that we present to our readers a series of remarkable pictures, taken by Mr. Latham, of the splendid Tudor and Jacobean house of Sir William Walrond, at present occupied by that well-known yachtsman, Mr. A. Barclay Walker, who has also a place in Ireland and another in Norway. Devonshire is peculiarly rich in beautiful houses, but it has, perhaps, no interiors that can match those at Bradfield. Later on we propose to illustrate the exterior of the mansion and its gardens. Its general character and some account of its internal features, and of the restoration effected about forty years ago, will occupy us to-day. The house stands in a very beautiful country, between the height of Black Down and the river Culm, sheltered in the hollow, and amid very winsome surroundings. The Culm, which rises in the great mass of hills in the east of the county, gives its name to Culmstock, Uffculme, Cullumpton, and some other places, and Bradfield lies on the left bank, about midway between the two last-named of these.

There is something very gratifying to our national pride in the knowledge that the Walronds belong to a considerable class of long-lineaged English gentlemen who have lived upon their ancestral acres for centuries. They came into possession of Bradfield, or, as it was then called, Bradfelle, apparently before the time of Henry III., and the original deed of conveyance by Fulke Paynel is still in existence. Thus they have been established in the valley of the Culm for some seven centuries, and there is a neighbouring house bearing their name which once belonged to a branch of the family. To Richard Walrond, the

grantee, followed William, and then three Johns, after whom came two more Willams and three more Johns, and Humphreys and Henrys began again to make their appearance, and so we come down to modern days. Various gentlemen of this many-linked chain married the heiresses of Stowford, Ufflet, Whitinge, and perhaps others.

Bradfield has not had an eventful history. So far as records show, the storms of civil strife seem to have passed it by, and its possessors have lived the useful lives of country gentlemen from generation to generation, taking their part in local affairs, and in some of those events in which the men of Devon have been prominent. The earliest and almost the only notice of buildings at Bradfield in mediæval times is that John Walrond had a licence for his oratory there in May, 1332. He, doubtless, had his house also, but of that every trace has vanished. The position of the chapel may well have been on the north side of the existing house, between two large clipped yews, and this part of the ground still retains the name of the chapel yard.

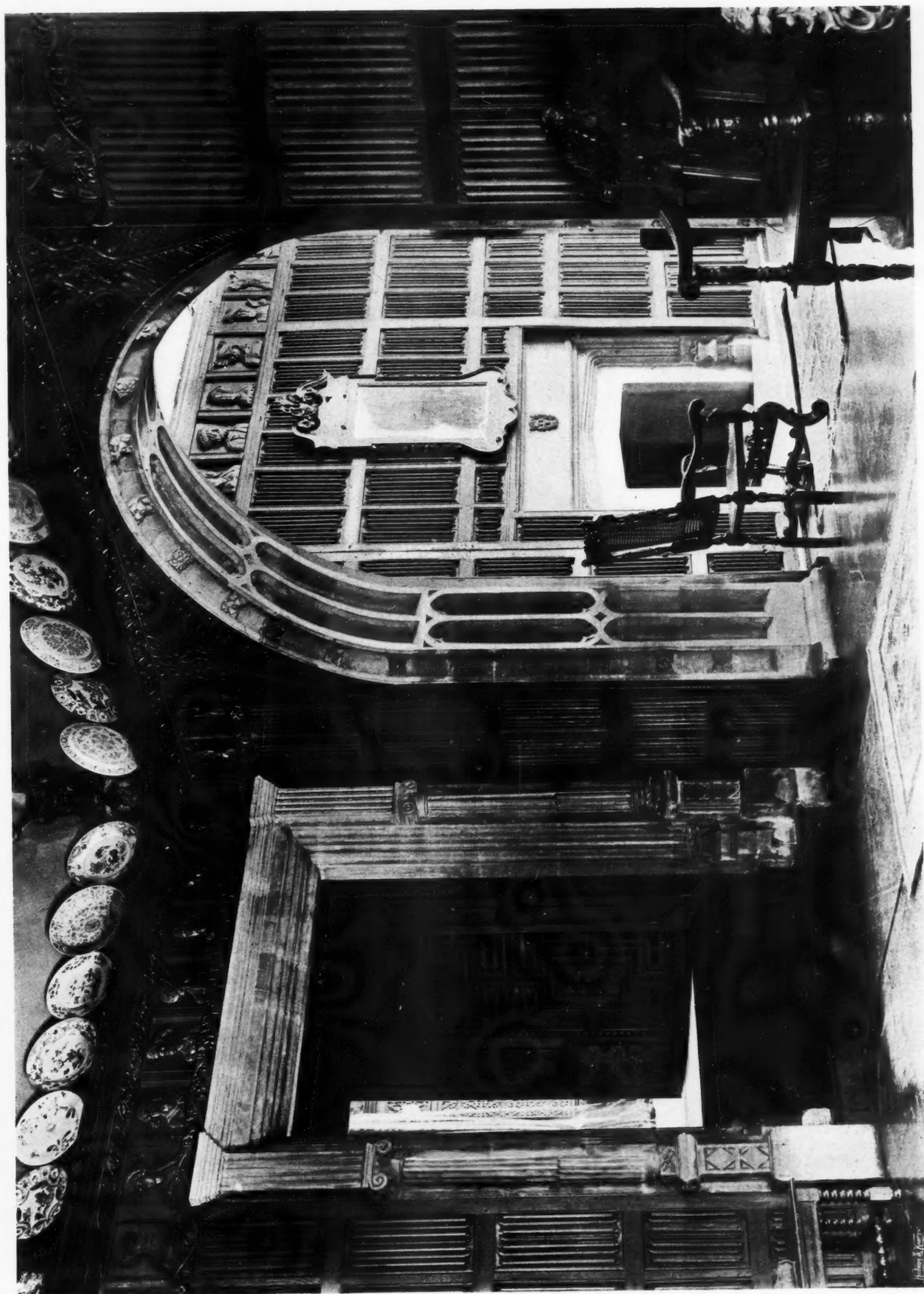
The earlier parts of the existing building appear to go back to the beginning of the sixteenth century, the remainder of the structure having been erected probably in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. The words "Vivat E. Rex" on the north wall may possibly record the completion of the second house at Bradfield, perhaps on the accession of Edward VI. The dates 1592 and 1604 are elsewhere to be seen in the edifice. The house owes nearly all its charm as a domestic structure to the late Sir John Walrond, who took it in hand about the year 1860, and, with the assistance of a good architect, very conscientiously



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THE PORCH.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



SOUTH-EAST CORNER OF THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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THE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

and completely restored it. The house had fallen into some decay, and the south wall, being in a very dilapidated state, had to be rebuilt. The same was the case on the north side, and the opportunity was seized of effecting some alterations.

The hall, which has a singularly beautiful and remarkable interior, is the oldest part of the existing structure. When Sir John Walrond began his work, this splendid chamber was in rather a deplorable state, and the restoration led to some interesting discoveries. On the removal of the plastering, which an uninstructed generation had placed upon the walls, jambs of former windows were found in the east wall, and it was discovered that there had been a window over the doorway. The grand old hammer-beam roof is the great feature, and it remains in its integrity, for, although new timbers were introduced where

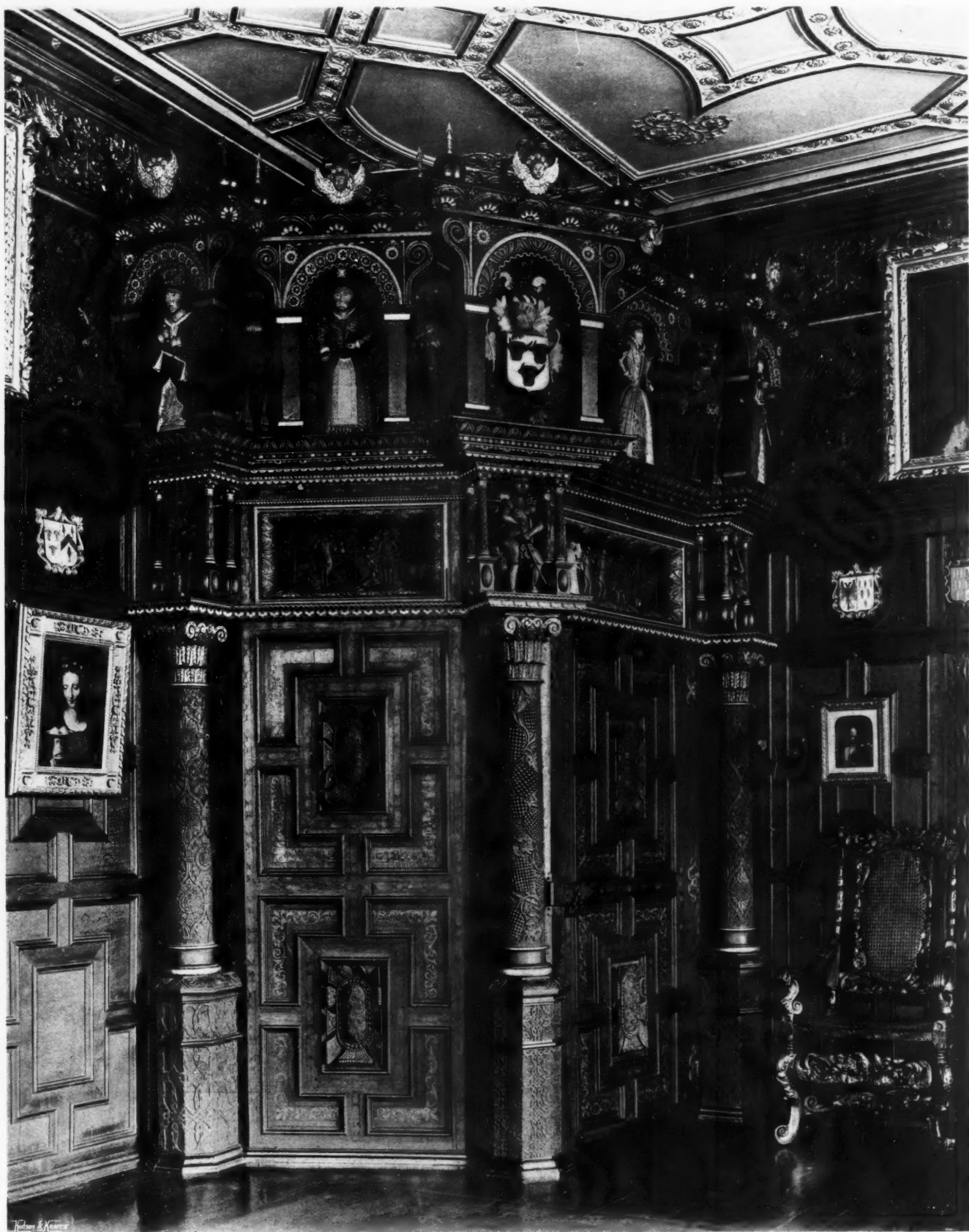
necessary, and decayed carvings replaced by new, the utmost care was taken to preserve everything that could safely be retained. Here are combined all the glories of a mediæval roof—fine hammer-beams with carved angels, a very deep and much-enriched cornice, tracery between the trusses, and carved pendants. A fine roof of the same character is at Wear Gifford, near Torrington, in the same county. Decayed as the roof was, none of it was taken down, it being raised *in situ* to the true level, and thoroughly repaired and strengthened. There was a fine mullioned window of eight lights in width on the east side, but this had been an insertion, and, at the restoration of the house, it was replaced by two windows separated by masonry, thus providing a solid support to the roof. Every bit of the old wood that could be kept remains, and what could not be preserved

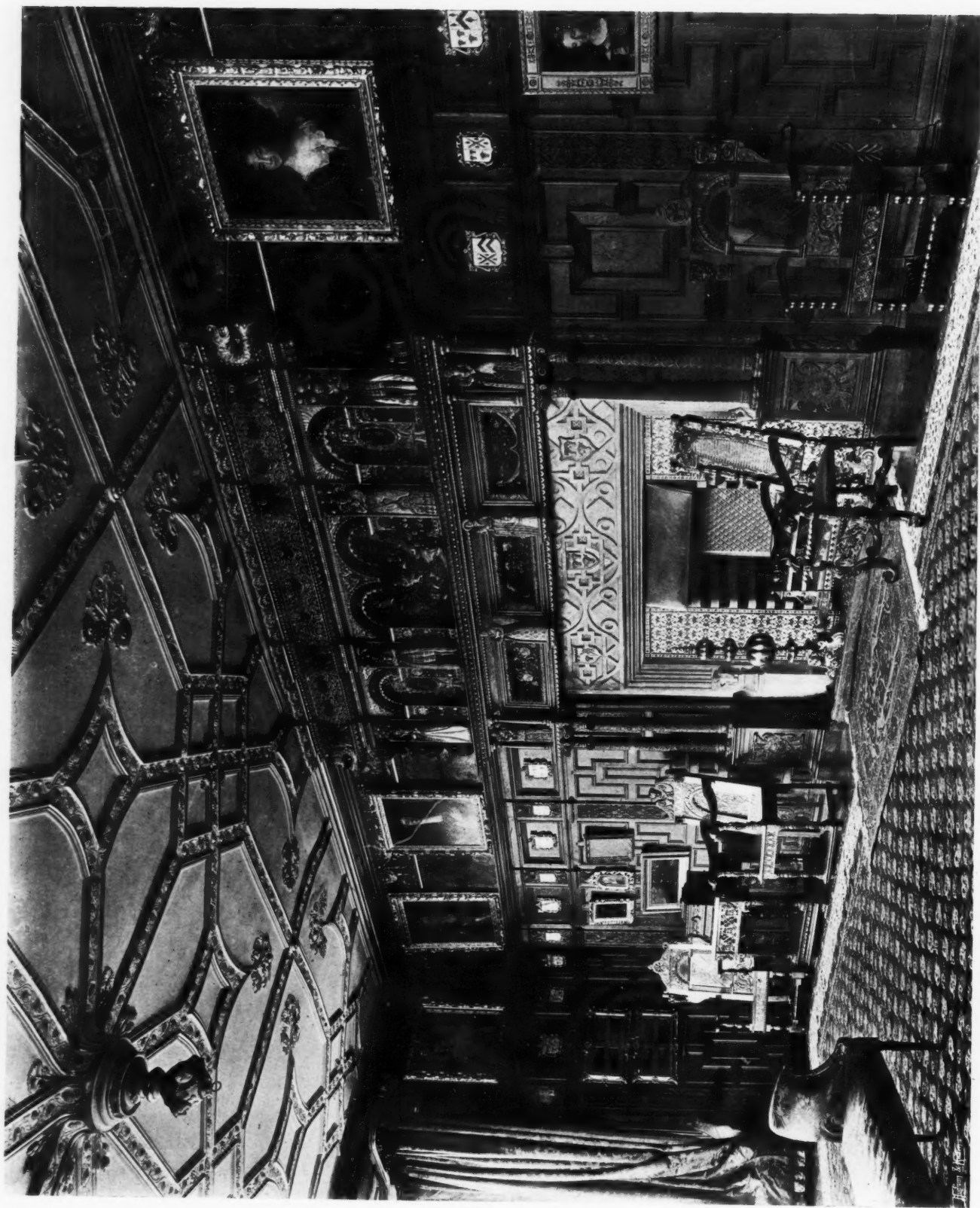
has been reproduced. The panelling is of the folded linen pattern, and in the cornice are heads curiously carved. Classic features mark the later taste, the whole effect, however, being that of Tudor or even earlier times.

One quaint survival is a dog-gate, such as was used in former times to prevent dogs going to the upper apartments. The minstrels' gallery is at the south end of the hall, adjacent to the old buttery and the kitchen, and there were curious openings between the buttery and the gallery, the use of which was not apparent, but it has been surmised that they were to enable refreshments to be handed up to the musicians. Two large angelic figures with scrolls are on the wall at the other

end of the great apartment, where is the dais. The shields of arms painted upon the window jambs are similar to those which existed before the restoration, and with the exception of the substitution of two windows for the great window of many lights on the east side, no changes were made. The restoration involved the removal of many coats of white paint, which an evil taste had applied to the woodwork. This noble apartment is 44ft. long, and more than 21ft. wide. The pictures show how exquisite is its detail, and reproduce the charm which makes it peculiarly satisfying to the eye, with its true domestic and restful character.

A doorway from the dais leads into the magnificent drawing-

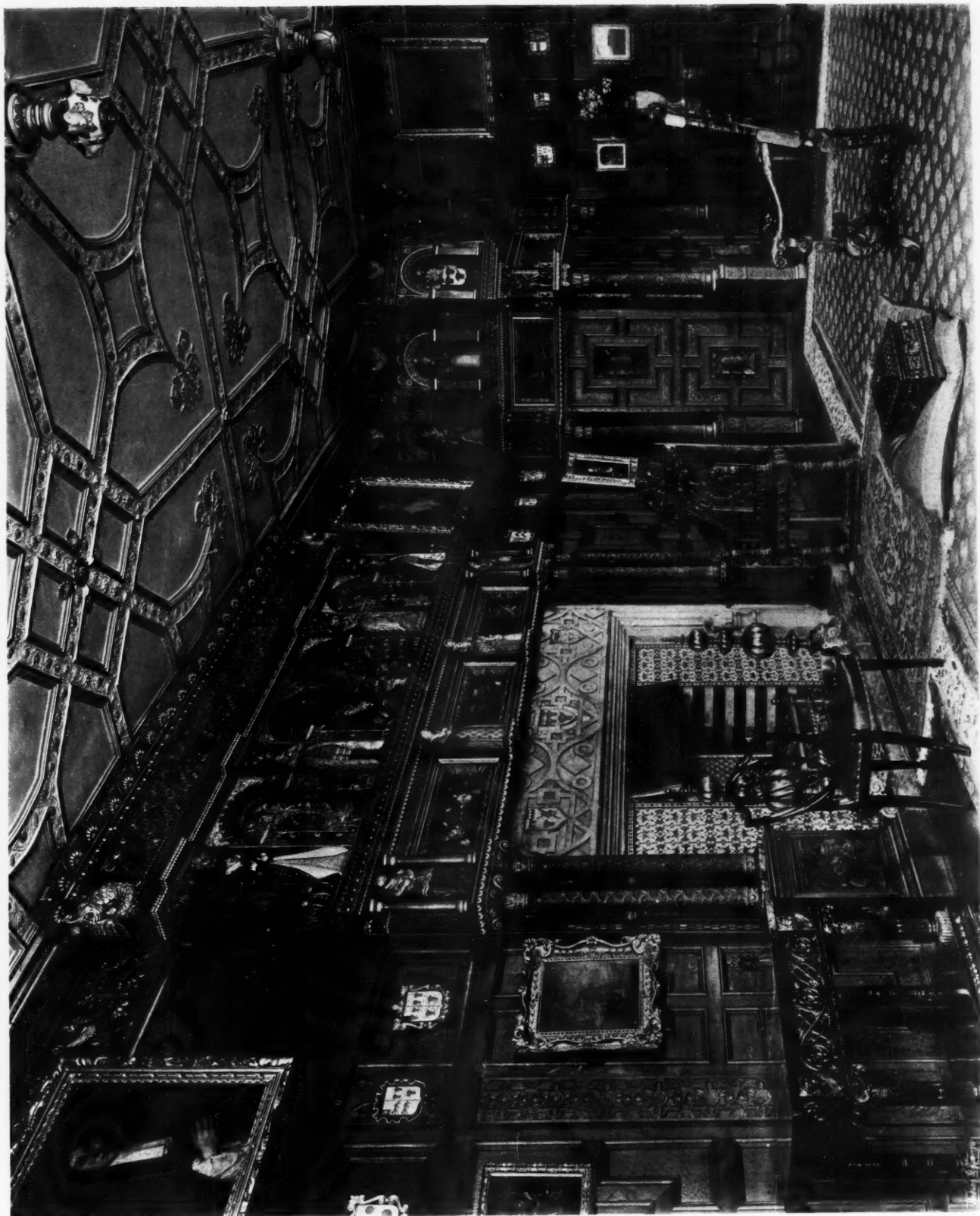




"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE DRAWING ROOM.

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THE DRAWING-ROOM, WEST SIDE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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CHIMNEY-PIECE IN THE DRAWING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

room, which is 34ft. long by 20ft. wide, and has one of the most charming interiors that can be conceived. The ceiling is rich and elaborate in its panelling and adornment, and the finely moulded oak-work of the walls, and the exquisite and tasteful carving of the pilasters, will be noticed. The design is unusual, and the armorial enrichments add character to it. The mantel-piece is a splendid example of the quaint Elizabethan or Jacobean work. There are elaborated and freely-treated Corinthian shafts, supporting an entablature with panels, and figures standing between them. These are extremely curious.

On the right is a female holding a goose by the neck; another figure is of a woman with a baby in her arms and a child standing by her knee; a third figure appears to be holding a lamb. These are quaint and odd, according to the spirit of the century in which they were produced. The upper range of panelling has also curious figures, and inlaid and enriched work under the archings. The upper part is painted in colours and with silver and gold, and the frieze is of fine Spanish leather. An extremely interesting feature of the drawing-room is the internal porch or lobby, which has enriched panelling, elaborate

carving, quaint figures, and armorial achievements of the Walronds. This was once disfigured with white paint, but the work was tastefully restored, and is painted in various colours and silver and gold, the lower scroll part being inlaid. The effect of the enrichment and colours is very beautiful and harmonious, and the drawing-room makes a magnificent apartment, full of the character of the English domestic life of the seventeenth century.

At the other end of the hall, as has been said, were the buttery and kitchen, but in the restoration and adaptation of the house to modern means a change was effected. These offices occupied a large part of the south front, and it was decided,

therefore, to build them afresh elsewhere in the house, and to create another family room. Moreover, the porch attached to the hall being inconvenient for the approach of carriages, it was considered desirable to make a new entrance here on the south side, and to relieve the flatness of this front of the mansion by adding bay windows in exact keeping with the structure. It is worthy of note that in the old kitchen, with its large fireplace and separate hatch, was an arrangement for turning the spits by water-power, a small stream being conducted close to the kitchen to work a diminutive water-wheel which set the spits in motion. Staircases at either end of the hall lead to the upper apartments, and on the north side was a small window at the level of the large



gallery on the upper floor, the object being, it is supposed, to enable the ladies who had retired to ascertain what the gentlemen were doing below, and to witness the revels which took place in their absence.

From what has been said, it will be observed that Bradfield had the customary arrangement of a Tudor mansion. There was the great hall, of unusual magnificence, as the centre point of the house, with the lobby, minstrels' gallery, buttery, and kitchens on the one hand, and the daïs at the other end giving access to the drawing-room and the private apartments. In very few English houses is such richness displayed as in the carvings and

panellings, and the late Sir John Walrond and his architect did a splendid work in recovering this noble house from partial decay, and particularly in removing coats of paint and disfigurements which a period of bad taste had caused to be applied and introduced, while, on the other hand, with scrupulous care everything that was decayed was replaced. Our pictures will show that the chambers are hung with portraits of members of the Walrond family and their kindred and friends, and that their marriages are recorded in armorial achievements, which are used with good effect decoratively. The colours are harmonious, and the whole effect is rich, good, and eminently beautiful.

AT THE FEAST OF STEPHEN.

THE usage of hunting the wren on St. Stephen's Day in Ireland is locally founded on the following tradition. During a period of rebellion in Ireland, a party of Royalists, worn out with hardship and incessant watchfulness, bivouacked in a secluded valley, which they considered so safe that they all fell asleep. While they lay thus the enemy approached, and when within musket shot a wren tapped with its bill three times on the drum. The sound startled the sentinel, and he, having given the alarm, the force awaited the attack and conquered.

According to a magazine about 1840, a similar custom prevailed at Rathlee in the Sister Isle. On Christmas Day and the Sunday previous, numbers of young men and boys turned out with sticks, and, hunting all the hedges, drove out and killed all the wrens amidst great shouting. The next morning the party reassembled, and, headed by a man carrying a large holly bush (decorated with ribbons), to which was attached a number of dead wrens, begged at the houses and petitioned all they met for "money for the wren."

Brand, in his "Popular Antiquities," states that Vallancey represents that the superstitious respect shown the wren, as the "king of birds," by the Druids gave offence to our first Christian missionaries, in obedience to whose injunctions

"he is still hunted and killed by the peasants on Christmas Day and in (*sic*) the following day he is carried about hung by the leg in the centre of

two hoops crossing each other at right angles; and a procession is made in every village of men women and children singing an Irish catch importing him to be king of all birds."

Brand also quotes from Sonnini's "Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt," an English translation of which appeared in 1800, proving that the custom was in vogue in the neighbourhood of Marseilles:

"A numerous body of men, armed with swords and pistols set off in search of a very small bird which the ancients call troglodytes (*Motacella troglodytes*, Lin.; *Anglice*, common wren). When they have found it,—a thing not difficult because they always take care to have one ready—it is suspended on the middle of a pole which two men carry on their shoulders as if it were a heavy burden. This whimsical procession parades around the town; the bird is weighed in a great pair of scales and the company then sits down to table and makes merry. The name they give to the troglodytes is not less curious than the kind of festival to which it gives occasion. They call it at Le Ciotat the polecat or père de la bécasse (father of the woodcock) on account of the resemblance of its plumage to that of the woodcock supposed by them to be engendered of the polecat, which is a great destroyer of birds, but which certainly produces none.

"GEO. H. BRIERLEY."

(*Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, Vol. XI., p. 297.)

The origin of the title "King of all Birds," as applied to the wren, arose from the following tradition: All the birds assembled to decide who should be king, and, after much discussion, it was



A. Horsley Hinton.

THE REED CUTTER.

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settled that he who could soar highest was best fitted for the title. The eagle, of course, went highest, and coming down last claimed the honour, when out of the feathers on his neck popped a wren, who claimed the throne and got it.

In Kerry small boys still hunt the wren on St. Stephen's Day; the processional saying or singing mentioned by Mr. Patterson is, however, a thing of the past. The "oldest inhabitant" has dictated to me the verses sung when he was a boy:

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds
St. Stephen's Day is caught in the furze;
Altho' he's small his family's great.
Please, madame, to fill us a treat;
And if you fill it of the small
It won't agree with these boys at all;
But if you fill it of the best
I hope in heaven your soul may rest.
Sing holly, sing ivy, sing holly
It's all but a folly
To keep a bad Christmas.

"Killarney.

"ROSS O'CONNELL."

(Notes and Queries, 6th Series, Vol. XI., p. 177.)

STONING THE WREN.

"When I was a lad in Derbyshire this cruel sport was a common amusement with big lads and young fellows, who turned out on Christmas Day and Pancake Day for that purpose. The band used to divide and hunt on both sides of the hedge. Some called the sport 'hunting God's little wren,' and some of the hunters appeared to be imbued with a superstitious notion that bad luck to them might be the result. I have heard it called many years ago 'Devil's sport.'

"Workshop.

"THOS. RATCLIFFE."

(Notes and Queries, 9th Series, Vol. IX., p. 234.)

"The Manx fishermen dare not go to sea without one of these birds taken dead with them, for fear of storms. See Scottish Galloridian Encyclopedia, p. 157.

"J. H. McMICALH."

(Notes and Queries, 9th Series, Vol. X., p. 95.)

In some counties of Ireland on St. Stephen's Day boys go round carrying dead wrens in small wooden boxes which they call coffins, and make demand for money. They say or sing, as they beg, the following rhyme:

"The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
On St. Stephen's Day she's (sic) cotched in the furze;
Although she's but wee her family's great,
So come down, lan'ledly, an' gie us a trate.
Then up wi' the kettle an' down wi' the pan,
An' let us ha' money to bury the wren.

"R. STEWART PATTERSON."

(Notes and Queries, 6th Series, Vol. X., p. 492.)

"As the same custom is observed in this city (Waterford), I wish to add a few more verses to those already sent you by Mr. Hayman:

"On Xmas Day I turned the spit,
I burned my fingers, I feel it yet
Between my finger and my thumb,
I eat the roast meat every crumb.
Sing, hubber ma dro my droleen, etc.

"We were all day hunting the wren,
We were all day hunting the wren,
The wren so cute and we so cunning,
He stayed in the bush while we were a-running.
Sing, hubber ma dro my droleen, etc.

"When we went out to cut the holly
All our boys were brisk and jolly,
We cut it down all in a trice,
Which made our wren-boys to rejoice.
Sing, hubber ma dro my droleen, etc.

"THOS. GIMLETTE."

(Notes and Queries, 2nd Series, Vol. V., p. 102.)

"The curious association of this bird with the Feast of the Three Kings, on which day in South Wales, or, in Ireland and in the South of France, on or about Xmas Day, it was customary for men and boys to 'hunt the wren,' addressing it in song as the king of birds . . . has never yet been explained."—ENCYCL. BRIT. ART. "WREN."

In the first volume of Hall's "Ireland" will be found an account of the parading of the streets of Cork on St. Stephen's Day annually by the humbler classes with holly boughs dressed with ribands, each holly bough having a dead wren. The song of the wren-boys is also given. A similar custom is observed in the town of Youghal, but the words of the "chanson" there are somewhat different. Here is the Youghal version:

INTRODUCTION.

"To Mr. * * * we've brought the wren
He is the best gentleman in the land
Put in your hand, pull out your purse
And give us something for the poor wren!

FIRST VERSE.

"The wren! the wren! the king of all birds
St. Stephen's Day was caught in the furze
Altho' he's little, his family's great—
I pray, young landlady, you'll fill us a treat.

CHORUS.

"Sing, overem, overem, droleen;
Sing, overem, overem, droleen;
Sing, overem, overem, chitimicore, hebemegola tambereen.

SECOND VERSE.

"If you fill it of the small
It won't agree with our boys at all
But if you fill it of the best
I hope in heaven your soul may rest.

CHORUS.

"Sing, etc., etc.

THIRD VERSE.

"It is the wren, as you may see,
'Tis guarded in a holly tree
A bunch of ribbons by his side
And the * * *(a) boys to be his guide.

CHORUS.

"Sing, etc., etc.

"SAMUEL HAYMAN."

(Notes and Queries, 1st Series, Vol. XII., p. 489.)

(a) Name of locality from which the boys come.

"The lines quoted by your correspondent R. S. Patterson, with the exception of the last two, are given nearly verbatim in Dyer's 'British Popular Customs,' 1876, page 497. The author says:

"On the anniversary of St. Stephen it is customary for groups of young villagers to bear about a holly bush adorned with ribbons, and having many wrens depending from it. This is carried from house to house with some ceremony, the 'wren-boys' chanting several verses, the burthen of which may be collected from the following lines of their song."

"He adds these two verses:

"My box would speak, if it had but a tongue,
And two or three shillings would do it no wrong.
Sing holly, sing ivy—sing ivy, sing holly,
A drop just to drink, it would drown melancholy.

"And if you draw it of the best
I hope in Heaven your soul may rest;
But if you draw it of the small
It won't agree with the wren-boys at all."

"Mr. Dyer refers to Croker's 'Researches in the South of Ireland,' 1824, p. 233.

"F. C. BIKBECK TERRY."

(Notes and Queries, 6th Series, Vol. XI., p. 57.)

THE LITTLE DANCER.

ONCE upon a time, not so very long ago, there lived in a great foreign city a poor woman, who was a dresser at the theatre. She had to help to dress the actresses who came and played in the theatre, and her life was a very hard one, and her work was very poorly paid. She had lost her husband three years after they were married, and she had two little girls, Stella and Edmée, who were brought up to dance in the fairy plays at Christmas. She was a good woman, who loved her children and taught them to love and fear God and do their duty. In this pious work she was much helped by a kind priest, called Father Gerome. The ballet-mistress at the theatre taught them how to dance, and, as they were diligent, intelligent children, they soon became the best dancers in the city, and always played the chief fairy parts.

Soon after they had made their first Communion, and, in consequence, felt almost like grown-up little women, Stella was set to play the part of the Queen of the Fairies, who had to fly through the air. She was fastened to strong wires and drawn quickly across the stage, with her wings spread out, and looked the loveliest fairy queen you can imagine. But one night a dreadful thing happened. The wire broke, and poor little Stella fell heavily on to the stage, and hurt her back so terribly that the doctor said she would never be able to stand or walk again. She had to lie all day on a couch, placed near the window of the garret where they lived, so that she might look out over the housetops and see the sky. Her little feet would never dance again; and instead of the brightly-lighted theatre, and the kind people and merry children who used to watch her and applaud her, and throw her lovely flowers and sweetmeats, she had to lie all alone in the garret while her mother and Edmée were at the theatre, earning money to keep the wolf of hunger from the door.

But little Stella was a good, patient child, and, instead of weeping and complaining of her hard lot, she used to spend the lonely hours dreaming of all sorts of lovely things, and imagining what her mother and Edmée were doing at the theatre. The angels whom God sends to take care of children put these happy thoughts in her heart, so that there was no room left for cross or selfish ones. The two little sisters loved each other dearly, and it was well they did so, for another great sorrow befell them. Their good, dear mother caught a bad chill one winter night, and came home to die, leaving her children quite alone in the world, except for Father Gerome. He promised the



Mrs. G. A. Barton.

THOUGHT.

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dying mother that as long as he lived he would watch over them. He could not give them money, for he was as poor as they were, but he could give them the love of his great heart and the counsels of his wise head, and he could pray for them to the Lord whom he loved and served; and this he did very faithfully, so that the children grew to feel as if he were indeed the "Father" they called him.

The manager at the theatre and the ballet-mistress were very kind when they heard that the two girls had nothing to live on but what Edmée earned, and they contrived always to find something for her to do. Sometimes she was a little boy, sometimes a girl; and at Christmas-time always the chief fairy. She would come home with flowers and oranges and nuts and sweetmeats thrown to her by the audience, with whom she was a great favourite. Sometimes good Father-Gerome used to fear that her head would be turned with so much applause and petting; but her one thought was Stella and Stella's happiness, and the priest knew that those who live for others cannot be far from God.

Edmée kept the tiny garret as neat as a new pin; she was a famous cook and great with her needle. How she mended and darned! while Stella, who could not use her poor hands, lay on her couch by the window amusing her with the wonderful stories she made up during the long, lonely evening hours, or listening to her tales of the theatre and the new plays. It was a great delight to Stella to watch her sister practising her dancing. Edmée would put out the candle—for one does not need more light than the fire gives for dancing—and in the red glow she would flit and caper about more like some dainty butterfly than a little human girl, while Stella's eyes watched every turn of the slender arms and the twinkling feet, or made suggestions as to the steps, for she had been a better dancer even than Edmée, and was the more imaginative of the two sisters.

So time went on till Christmas had come round again and Edmée was to dance in a lovely ballet, written by a famous poet and musician. She was to represent Psyche, or the human soul, and the ballet-mistress and the poet had invented together an exquisite dance for her and a dress of fairy gauze with rainbow-coloured wings. She was allowed to bring it home one night during the rehearsal for the ballet and show it to Stella. Father Gerome came in just as she was dancing in it in the firelight. Stella's great dark eyes were big with delight, and Edmée looked such a lovely little creature, and danced with such grace and charm, that she bewitched even the good priest, who cared nothing for earthly pleasures. But when she had finished there was an anxious look on his gentle old face. He feared

lest his little daughter should be led astray from her pure simplicity by the success which he knew would be hers when the night came for her to dance as Psyche before the public.

"Won't she be beautiful, dear Father?" sighed Stella.

"May God keep your soul as fair as your looks, my daughter," answered the good Father, laying his hand on Edmée's golden head. "You will be dancing on the Christ-child's birthday; dance, therefore, to please the Christ-child."

"That was a beautiful thought of the dear Father's," said Edmée; but Stella said nothing, and hid the thought in her heart, and prayed night and morning that so it might be.

And when the night came for Edmée to dance for the first time in public in the new ballet, and she flung her arms tight round her crippled sister in a good-bye hug, Stella whispered softly to her, "Dance, my darling, to please the Christ-child."

"Pray for me, then, my Star," cried Edmée, and she ran merrily down the stairs and into the street.

But Stella lay with wide eyes, looking out at the starry winter sky, and prayed with all her heart that her darling Edmée might dance to please the Christ-child.

Now, as she prayed a strange thing happened.

The walls of the garret faded away, and Stella lay on her couch out in an open field, with a soft, warm air blowing round her, and overhead a wonderful moon and stars in a great arched sky, whose deep blue was quite different from the sky in her northern home. In front of her was a wide cave, divided into stalls for cattle. Oxen were munching their evening meal, and a patient ass stood in a corner, near which was a manger with a lantern hung over it. The manger was full of hay, and in it lay a little Babe. His hands were stretched out to His Mother, who bent over Him, and such love and purity was in both their faces that Stella's eyes filled with tears as she looked at them. The Mother drew Him to her heart, and sang a soft cradle song to Him, and it sounded to Stella like this:

"Sleep, Lamb of mine, and take Thy rest
Here for a moment on my breast!
Thou for a world of sin art given,
Soon for its gain must Thou be riven,
Lord of the mystic seven!
Lord of my heart and Heaven!"

"Sleep, Lamb of God, and take Thy rest
Here for a moment on my breast!
Still let my hushed heart shelter Thee,
Thou who must hang upon the tree,
Lord of mine agony!
Lord of the Life to be!"

But the eyes of the Child were sad, and Stella could hear the tender voice of His Mother murmuring, "Oh! my Lord, my



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REST.

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Beloved, what shall I do to give Thee joy?" Suddenly across the floor of the cave where the golden moonlight fell most clearly, there stepped a little familiar figure in soft, gauzy robes and wings of rainbow colours, and she began to dance before the Babe in the manger. Like a wave of the sea, caught by a perfect sunset, the little figure rose and fell, then flitted as a bird might across the moonlight space with delicate wreathings of the childish arms and wavings of the childish hands. It was as though the soul of a child danced indeed for the joy of its Maker, and as the Child in the manger watched, His sad eyes brightened, and a smile of grave sweetness broke over His wonderful face. The blessed Mother still bent over Him, filled with delight in His pleasure. At last the little dancer stayed her quick feet, and fell softly upon her knees before the manger.

The Babe turned and looked at her, and stretched out His little hands to her, as He had done to His Mother. But the Mother, moving closer to the kneeling child, laid her hand upon her head and said, "Blessed art thou, oh! child, for thou hast danced before the Holy Child this night, and hast taken the pain from His eyes." And even as she spoke a darkness fell over the place, and Stella saw no more.

"Dreaming, my daughter?" said a kind voice at her ear, and there was good Father Gerome standing beside her couch, and the red fire lighting up the bare, well-known garret walls, and there, too, stood Edmée in her old blue frock and brown cloak, her arms filled with flowers and gifts.

"Look what they have given me, the dear good people, Star!" she cried joyfully; "and oh! it was a great night! The ballet-mistress said that no child had ever danced as I danced, and the people called and called again for me, and threw all these." And she opened her arms and flung her treasures on Stella's couch, her face shining with excitement and happiness.

"But I saw you dance," said Stella in a voice that seemed to the two who stood beside her to come from far away; "and it was not in the theatre, but in a wonderful cave in the moonlight before a manger, and in the manger was the Christ-child and His blessed Mother bent over Him. And when you had danced she laid her hand on your head, and said, 'Blessed art thou, oh! child, for thou hast danced before the Holy Child this night, and hast taken the pain from His eyes.'"

"But it was in the theatre I danced," said Edmée, perplexed, "and, dear Father, I am afraid I was not thinking of the blessed Christ-child at all, but only of Stella—only of you, my Star!"

But Stella burst into tears. "Oh!" she sobbed, "I thought the dear God had heard my prayers, and now Edmée has only danced for me!"

"My little daughter," said Father Gerome, and his face had a light in it such as it wore when he served before God's altar; "God be praised! for inasmuch as Edmée danced for you, the least of His brethren, she has indeed danced to please the Christ-child."

RUFUS—SED REGINA.

By EVELYNE E. RYND.

"Oh, 'Enery, 'Enery," wailed Sophia. "Now you know there's not the least use you takin' on like that there, Serphia Smash," said her mother. But the fact that one's lamentations are useless does not make one lament the less, and Sophia sobbed rather more loudly than before. Her mother looked at her helplessly a moment; then her face suddenly changed, and her lips twisted. "If you only 'adn't 'ad red 'air, Serphia," she said; "which, where you got it from I don' know, neither your pore father nor me never 'avin' thought of sech a thing, I don' believe it would 'ave 'appened."

Sophia raised a face of tear-stained, horrified incredulity from the kitchen table. "Mother!" she gasped; "but you always said it was horbun, mother."

Mrs. Smash moved uneasily. She opened her mouth twice, and shut it again. Then she once more abandoned herself to the frankness of despair. "If you'd a-married 'Enery 'Ockles straight orf an' successful, Serphia," she said, "it would a-been horbun."

Silence followed. Sophia stared at her mother, and her mother stared elsewhere.

"You always told me looks didn't matter all that much," said Sophia in a trembling voice. "I never knowed they mattered."



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"They doesn't, Serphia," said Mrs. Smash in an equally trembling voice. "Not from a religious point of view, they doesn't. We 'ave to take the religious point of view of these things when impossibil to do hotherwise, bein' generally obliged to it by men. 'Be good, an' you'll do, Serphia,' is what I said steady, when I see it wasn't goin' to grow no darker as you grow'd up; an' few things could be more trew. But, of course, it doesn't go so far as to say what you'll do, which it might be something you'd rather not," added Mrs. Smash. She gazed out of the window with the fixed attention of one who dares not so much as wink for fear of weeping; but Soph'a's gaze at her was even more strained. Her brown eyes had the tragic startled stare of eyes which, looking back, see for the first time.

"I never know'd looks mattered all that much," she said again with quivering lips. "I wish I'd thought—I wish I'd known—"

"Now I suppose you're a-carstin' of it up again' me," said Mrs. Smash, seizing the opportunity, and bursting into tears. "Because I've tried to bring you up to take a religious view of things—me knowin' it was only too likely. No one would never take no view of you of hany kind; but, of course, it's all a mother can expect—"

"I'm not a-carstin' nothin' up again' you!" cried little Sophia, flying to her mother. "I wouldn't do sech a thing, I wouldn't. Oh, mother, mother!"

"My girl, my blessed darlin'," wept Mrs. Smash. "My only, only one; an' as good a child as ever step; to think they should 'ave the chanct of jeerin' at you! But never mind 'oo despises of us. We've got each other still." And she kissed, and folded in passionate arms, the abandoned red head in her lap.

"You don't really think it's that, mother, do you?" faltered Sophia, clinging closer. "It seems that mean, some'ow—a girl can't 'elp 'er 'air—'Enery isn't—you don't really think it was that?"

"I'm halmost afraid it might be, Serphia," sobbed her mother. "I'm really 'arf afraid it mus' be."

"Am I so hugly, then, mother?" whispered Sophia. But Mrs. Smash did not know how to answer that. "Never mind, Serphia," she cried passionately. "Don't you mind 'im; you flick your fingers at 'im."

"I don't believe I can," said Sophia, choking and white.

"Yes, you can, Serphia. You're young to 'ave it come to you; but you can. It comes to many an' many a woman, an' it's got to be flicked at, Serphia. Set your mind to it. Are you goin' to lie down for the firs' man to trample on you? Don't you mind 'im. You'll marry a fifty times 'andsomer, pleasanter chap than 'im yet, you will."

"I can't do," said Sophia, with a half laugh amid her bitter tears. "There isn't one, there—oh!"

"Serphia," said Mrs. Smash, shakenly, her cheek against her daughter's fallen head. "I 'adn't meant to tell you. I don't know as I'd better tell you now, but perraps—an' there's that about 'ard trewths, any'ow, you can 'it one trewth with the other an' get the better of 'em so. I 'eard to-day what 'Enery 'Ockles 'as been sayin' about you down street."

Sophia seemed to stop breathing. Her hands, which, reaching up for comfort, she had clasped round her mother's shoulders, gripped them suddenly so tightly that Mrs. Smash with difficulty repressed an ejaculation. "What does 'e say, mother?" said Sophia.

"Mrs. Gill 'eard Mrs. Watts repeatin' of it to Mrs. Fry, she 'avin' 'eard it from 'er sister, and Mrs. Gill tole me," said Mrs. Smash. "'Serphia Smash is a good little soul enough,' ses 'e careless, 'but I always turns again' a red 'ead sooner or later,' ses 'e. An' if 'e can say that, Serphia—it isn't only this town girl—"

Dead silence followed.

"Serphia," said her mother, brokenly. Sophia stretched up her hands, and lifted her face blindly.

"I'll not mind 'im, mother," she answered, breathlessly, "give me—just a moment."

After that moment both mother and daughter dried their eyes. Mrs. Smash, her face restored to its usual resolute composure, returned to the shop; Sophia went into the garden to pull the vegetables for the midday meal.

Mrs. Smash was not popular in Greybars. She had come there as a widow, when Sophia was a gleaming-headed, sedate little five year old, to take on the minute haberdashery shop which her husband's sister had left her. Apparently she managed to make it pay, but it is doubtful whether she would have done so had there been a second haberdashery shop in the village. Greybars only dealt with her because it had to. She was a stranger, and it disliked strangers. Moreover, the shop had been what it called "left out of the place," a proceeding of which the said place highly disapproved. Mrs. Gill was own sister to Miss Smash, and had quarrelled with her steadfastly for as long as anyone could remember, and the whole village therefore espoused Mrs. Gill's cause when Miss Smash was found to have left house, shop, and stock to her brother's widow. It

might have been supposed that in thirteen years Mrs. Smash could have lived down the prejudices inspired by this unfortunate *début*, but she never did. Perhaps she never troubled to try. Anyhow, at the end of the thirteen years she had not a friend in the place, nor was there one face at whose coming her own cold, nervous countenance softened by so much as a line.

Thus it came about that Sophia and her mother lived very much apart from the village life. The shining-faced little child grew up a friendly shining-faced maiden, with a voice like a bird's, and a contented turn of mind that bade her find her mother quite sufficient company, and her reading and sewing and singing and shop-minding quite sufficient occupation. Mrs. Smash sometimes looked at her with eyes of secret regret and pride.

"I don't suppose Serphia 'ill ever marry," she said to herself resolutely, "not with me in the persition I have in the place, an' 'er with that coloured 'air. Heveryone 'ill look at that, an' never 'ave the sense to look no further. An' she's like me—she don't arsk for favers. She don't know enough to arsk nothin' yet, bless 'er. Well, it can't be helped. It mus' be too religious, like the rest of life."

She brought Sophia up to the same strictly Scriptural self-respecting independence that she cultivated herself, and Sophia learnt it easily. To her, her mother's statements were statements of facts; and on facts Sophia could always repose contentedly without any desire either to persuade others or justify herself.

"They calls 'carrots' after me, mother," she had said when first they came to Greybars, eyeing her mother with mingled misgiving and wrath.

"Your 'air is horbun, Serphia," replied Mrs. Smash with dignity.

"Is horbun a nice colour, mother?" asked Sophia.

"Quite as nice as any other, if not more so," replied Mrs. Smash; and from that moment the satisfied Sophia never gave a second thought either to the colour of her hair or the remarks passed upon it.

But the village disliked this friendly indifference to its opinion.

"That there red-'aired piece of Widder Smashis," remarked Mrs. Gill, "is too quiet for my taste. Red-'aired girls generally 'as too much nacher to 'ave any character, whatever they appears; an' the quieter they be 'aves the more I suspects 'em."

The first night Henry Hockles walked home from the choral-class with Sophia Mrs. Smash was ironing. Her doors were wide open to the summer night, and when she heard the strong voice and step coming up the cliff-lane by Sophia, she stopped ironing so suddenly, and for so long, that a brown triangle burnt itself on the sheet. Still motionless, she listened to the good-nights at the back-garden gate; but when Sophia came in, her mother's hands were flying up and down the long board with all their accustomed speed and precision.

"Well, Serphia," she said, in her usual greeting, without looking round.

"Well, mother," said Sophia. "'Enery 'Ockles saw me 'ome, mother. Oh! mother, you've burnt the sheet!"

"I thought I 'eard someone," remarked her mother, continuing to iron. "Burnt the sheet, 'ave I? Well, accidents will 'apping. An' what did 'e take an' see you 'ome for?"

"Why, I don't know," said Sophia. "'E's never done sech a thing before. Mother, that sheet—!"

"As the sheet's mine, Serphia, perraps you'll leave it be," said her mother. "Why didn't you ask Mr. 'Ockles inter supper?"

"Why! I didn't know—I never thought—" said the greatly astonished Sophia.

"You should 'ave," said her mother. "An' 'im bringin' you all that way this dark night. It's only perlite."

"I 'ardly know 'im, mother," explained Sophia. "I don't think 'e'd ever 'ave noticed me if it 'adn't been that Miss Anstruther 'ad a cold at the last moment, an' Mary Golden told I knew the solo."

"Did you sing the solo?" said Mrs. Smash, suddenly straightening herself.

"Yes," replied Sophia, staring at her. "It was easy enough. I've 'eard Miss Anstruther sing it so often. Why?"

"Nothin'," said Mrs. Smash, relaxing. "Go and get your supper, child."

"That burn'll be a great hole when it's washed," said Sophia, sorrowfully and wonderingly, as she departed.

Mrs. Smash went on working for a few moments with compressed lips and an intent face. She lifted the finished pile of clothes from the board to the table, and halfway across the room she stopped. Against her open door pressed the illimitable night; and from far away the stars looked down on the little earthly light of her home.

"If Serphia marries the best match in the place in spite of everythink," she said, as if she were addressing someone, "these fears will have been made up for. That I allow. It's early days to talk of marrying, but if it happens—that I allow."

A month went by. The voice that Miss Anstruther's cold had unexpectedly brought to light was welcomed with ardour by

the choirmaster, and Sophia sang the solos now, her shy eyes opening heart's doors for her soft notes with wonderful success. And when class was over, Henry Hockles saw her home. Henry was the only son of Mrs. Hockles, who kept the Laurel Inn, which stands, halfway up, on the steep little twisting street that winds through Greybars from the grey sea to the grey old hills. His dark eyes and curled head were the focus of all glances and a good many minds when he came for a holiday from the country town where he was studying for his examination in chemistry; and that he should escort Sophia Smash home from her very choral-class for a whole month was a fact that roused a great deal of comment.

"That there red-wooded piece of Widder Smashis," remarked Mrs. Gill, sarcastically, "is a-comin' out strong, I 'ear. What did I say?"

To each other, Sophia and her mother said nothing, not even as much as, in her interest and wonder, Sophia had said at first. But Sophia took to coming over from her seat in the evenings, silently and unexpectedly, and continuing to read her book by her mother's feet, with one close-pressed arm across her mother's knee. Sometimes from thence she looked over the sea that went out into the world's miles from below the edge of their garden. Once she started, and then sighed.

"What's wrong now, Serphia?" said her mother.

"Nothin'," said Sophia. "Wrong? nothin'! I thought I 'eard somethink, that's all."

"What did you think you 'eard?" said her mother, sewing steadily on.

"Oh, I don't know," said Sophia. Then she lifted a suddenly flushing, smiling face. "Somethink on the road, mother," she said.

"You get too many stoopid notions from that everlastin' book-readin' of yours," was all her mother answered. And both thought "perhaps it's love," and neither "perhaps it's sorrow."

Then the golden-haired Araminta Workington came to stay in Greybars with her cousins, and things changed. She came for her health's sake. She was a dressmaker, and her cheeks were pink. She had town ways, and town frocks, and town

fascinations, and Greybars admired her almost as much as she admired herself. Whether Henry admired her also and equally, Greybars was not quite certain, and neither was Arabella. She came from the town where he worked, and he seemed fully

prepared to allow that their previous acquaintanceship established a claim. He escorted her amiably everywhere, and allowed her to take possession of him on all occasions; but there was a certain lazy amusement in the way he sometimes looked at her, and a lack of anxiety in his attentions, which were held to show that he considered himself no more bound to Araminta Workington than to Sophia Smash. However that might have been, it was a golden head that went home from class-singing by Henry Hockles' side now.

"You'll go to choral-class and sing the solers, Serphia," said Mrs. Smash.

"Yes, mother," said Sophia; and Mrs. Smash went also. She sat in the front row, her cold face colder than ever, her repellent air more uncompromising, and listened unbendingly to all the practices. Her steady eyes always met Sophia's when Sophia stood up to sing the solos; and Sophia always sang without a falter. When the class was over, Mrs. Smash took her daughter home.

The long hot summer blazed to its end, and, like a burning pyre, leapt at its finish into greater heat than ever.

"You'll wear your weekday 'at to the treat, Serphia," said Mrs. Smash, on the morning of August 30th.

"Isn't it rather shabby?" said Sophia, indifferently.

"It's as stout as it's shabby, anyhow, and as shady as it's stout," replied Mrs. Smash. "An' the sun is somethink hawful. Besides, if it's shabby it can't be spoilt, an' unless I'm much mistook, you'll all come 'ome a deal wetter nor what you started."

"Why, there isn't a sign of rain, mother," said Sophia, looking out from the high cliff

edge across the shining cloudless spaces of the morning sky.

"The signs of the Lord aren't always in the 'eavens, Serphia," replied Mrs. Smash. So Sophia wore her weekday hat to the choral-class treat.



G. J. T. Walford.

A WILD RIVER.

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It so happened that she was the only one who wore a hat at all when the younger members of the party, lunch over, climbed out of the woods that fill the river-rent gap in the cliffs where the picnic had taken place. The river makes sedgy places in the shadows at the bottom, and there the great docks grow in thousands. And as they came across, the young folk plucked the wide leaves and made green caps for themselves and each other. Sophia, wandering along with the rest, and watching their proceedings with friendly, dreamy eyes, made none. She was thinking of other things.

The green-capped troop left their ordinary headgear just inside the wood, and went out along the bright cliff-tops; and there were just two miles of high, bare country between them and shelter when the storm predicted by Mrs. Smash broke.

"Take hands and run," said Henry Hockles; and they came, a long, laughing, bare-headed line, streaming back through the pelting rain. Araminta, hand in hand with Henry, ran and laughed with the best of them for the first five minutes. Then she suddenly put her hand to her face, bent her head, and fell into a dreadful silence.

"Come on," said Henry. "What are you hanging back for? Tired?"

began to run; but it was just a chance I did. I was close to you. I'd 'ave come sooner, but I couldn't think what excuse to make. 'E didn't see nothin'. No one did, I'm pretty sure. Take my 'andkerchief an' rub it off."

"I 'ardly hever uses it," said Araminta, hurriedly; "not once in a blue moon, I don't. It's a little somethink as brightens the 'air. It isn't a dye."

"I know," said Sophia; "there's some green on your forehead still. Let me 'elp."

"It 'ill go on runnin'," said Araminta, despairingly.

"Not if you take my 'at," said Sophia; "it's such stout straw it keeps out the rain, and it's so wide it 'ill cover the parts that are run already. Now you're splendid. No one can see hanythink. You look nice."

"Oh, I do 'ope 'e didn't see. I wouldn't 'ave 'ad 'im see. 'E's not like some. Oh! Miss Smash, I'm so obliged," gasped Araminta.

Genuine pity shone in Sophia's liquid brown eyes.

"'E didn't see," she said, reassuringly. "I come just in time. Don't cry."

"What on earth are you crying for, any'ow?" said Henry's half-angry, half-bewildered voice.



Aubrey Harris.

THE RISING STORM.

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"No—yes," said Araminta, without lifting her head. "I—nothin'."

"Take 'old of my arm, if you like," said Henry. "I can get you along quicker then. We're falling behind."

"No, no!" cried Araminta. "Oh, oh!"

"What on earth's the matter?" said Henry, bewildered.

Araminta, stumbling along with her head down and her handkerchief to her face, tried to answer, failed, and burst into tears.

At that instant the voice of Sophia Smash, quiet and sedate, spoke close beside them. "I think Miss Workington 'as torn the braid of her skirt. If you'll go on, I can 'elp her."

"Oh, yes!" cried Araminta, turning and clinging to Sophia. "It's the braid of my skirt. Go away for a minute."

"Well, of all the—!" ejaculated Henry.

"Go on, please," said Sophia, meeting his gaze with determined brown eyes. Henry shot a sharp glance from one girl to the other's hidden head, turned, and strode on ahead in silence.

"Oh! do you think 'e saw?" sobbed Araminta.

"No," said Sophia. "I 'appened to see it when it first

"Is that you, 'Enry?" said Araminta, starting violently. "Nothin'. I'm not cryin'. I'm all right now. But what'll you do yourself, Miss Smash?"

"Oh, a red 'ead takes no 'urt," said Sophia, and ran off into the rain. Henry started, looked after her, and opened his mouth as if to speak. Then he checked himself, and took Araminta's hand. "Come on," he said, shortly; "we're far enough behind the others already."

Araminta was not sufficiently clever to do anything but rejoice over the significant fact that he asked for no further explanation on the way home.

"Where's your 'at, Sophia?" demanded Mrs. Smash, a little later, as she drew Sophia to the kitchen fire with a determined hand, and began to strip her of her drenching things.

"Araminta Workington's got it," replied Sophia.

"Araminta Workington!" said Mrs. Smash, pausing in her task. "Well! An' what's that you've got on your head?"

"'Enry 'Ockles' black silk scarf," said Sophia, somewhat abashed. At this Mrs. Smash came to a dead stop.

"What?" she said, in a strange voice.

"'E gave it me, mother," said Sophia, meeting her mother's

gaze with steady eyes, if flushed cheeks. "E made me take it drivin' back. I'll tell you 'ow it 'appened."

She told accordingly. "When we got to Greybars school 'e wanted to see me 'ome, but I said we was all so wet, we'd much better all see ourselves 'ome separately."

"Ow did you say it?" said Mrs. Smash.

"Oh—cheerful," said Sophia, perfectly comprehending her mother's question.

"Go on," said Mrs. Smash.

"Then I 'eld 'is scarf out to 'im, but 'e said I couldn't go 'ome sech a night with nothin' on my 'ead, an' 'e'd come an' fetch it 'imself to-morrer night, if 'e might. There was a lot lookin' on an' listenin', an' I didn't think—I thought—it would 'ave been worse to make a fuss." Sophia's voice broke on a sudden tired sob, which she checked with an air of surprise. "I don't know why I did that," she said.

"Go on," said Mrs. Smash, rubbing away at her daughter's cold little feet.

"That's all," said Sophia. "I told a lie, mother," she added, with a sigh, as if she felt uneasy that the fact seemed to have escaped her mother's notice.

"What lie was that?" said her mother.

"About Miss Workington's skirt braid," replied Sophia. "I couldn't think of what to say to get 'im away. I suppose it didn't matter much."

"Lies always matters," said Mrs. Smash, and added, "But there's some as can reckon pretty safely on bein' fergiven."

That night, as Sophia, her soft face against her mother's shoulder, was falling comfortably asleep in her favourite position, she was surprised by a sudden question from Mrs. Smash.

"When it come to you that Araminta's 'air-dye was a-runnin' down 'er face, Serphia," she said, "an' that she natcherally didn't want 'Enery 'Ockles to see it, did you 'esitate before you set about plannin' to 'elp 'er?" The question had to be repeated twice before Sophia grasped its drift. Then it surprised her highly. "No!" she said. "Why should I a-'esitated? It would 'ave been dreadful for 'er if 'e'd seen it."

"Well, go to sleep, child," said Mrs. Smash.

"An' to think," she said half-aloud some hours later, when Sophia's soft breathing had long made the accompaniment to her mother's busy thoughts, "that there's those as 'ear and see no further than 'er red 'ead, an' prefers a yellor-dyed one."

But—when Henry Hockles came to fetch his black scarf the next evening, he made it so clear that he was not one of these, that Mrs. Smash, who received him in a deplorable and dignified solitude, which she refused to lighten even for five minutes, said he might come again.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

APPROPRIATE to the closing year, the third series of *Memories of the Months* (Arnold), by the Right Hon. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Bart., M.P., F.R.S., affords pleasant reading, but it has its characteristic shortcomings. Angling stories, which make a good part of the volume, are so very much alike. There are the weather and the scenery, the fisherman's hopes and fears, the cast, the ripple, the swirl, the Titanic struggle, the success or the failure, and the subsequent lucubrations. That is the angling story, and our author's besetting defect in literature is that he cannot keep away from salmon. Nor can he keep away from etymological disquisitions after the manner of "Trench on the Study of Words." Descriptions of sporting jaunts in foreign lands are also always very much alike, and if we subtract these, too, from Sir Herbert Maxwell's *Memories of the Months*, little remains but a certain dilettante science invalidated by a habit of drawing immensely large conclusions from facts that are infinitely small. As a characteristic case in point, we may quote his serious discovery that "the artistic sense of the Celt is not yet extinct," because Irish salmon flies are brightly coloured! As a quip this might pass, but as an argument it is absurd. Again, he tells us that if the Capital of England had been fixed on the southern instead of the northern side of the Thames, we should now speak of ourselves as "vine yellows that woneth in her island"—as if the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the learning of the Church, and the authority of classical literature, have not been more real agents in regulating British speech than any Cockney influence.

Another characteristic instance of absurdly large conclusions drawn from very slender premisses is Sir H. Maxwell's argument—from the distribution of two fishes, the Galaxias attenuatus and the turbot—that South America and Australasia were once joined by land, that the German Ocean was a plain, and that terrestrial connection existed between Europe and America! Here, indeed, is an intolerable deal of shuffling of continents and oceans to accommodate the habitats of two unimportant fishes—habitats which are very simply explained by the fact that, in all probability, all of our freshwater fishes were once marine, and retreated up the rivers as the sea, which is always growing saltier,

became too salt for them. Thus some of the galaxias and some of the turbot found a home in the rivers of one continent, and some in those of another, without any necessity for turning the world upside-down to get them there.

Sir Herbert Maxwell is equally dogmatic on equally slender grounds in the long chapter dealing with the history of the City of Winchester, where he reads ecclesiastical prejudice between the lines of the received versions of the story of King Edwy and Queen Elgiva. That the young queen was branded on the face, and subsequently hamstrung by Church authority, is undeniably true; but however we may deplore such evidence of the brutality of the age, we have no warranty for describing St. Dunstan and Odo, Archbishop of Canterbury, as drunken reprobates. The fact was, no doubt, that this silly boy-king had fallen under the spell of a pretty face allied to a masterful—or rather mistressful—disposition. In defiance of the Church he married his cousin, and in defiance of the State he left the Coronation banquet to join his charmer. He was brought back by force, and, in the subsequent struggle for supremacy, petticoat influence was defeated, with atrocious details peculiar to the times; but this affords no reason for judging the chief actors in the tragedy by twentieth-century standards of civilisation.

In language, history, and science Sir Herbert Maxwell seems never quite happy unless he is laying down large laws. "Nature," he says, "bestows a blush upon the rose and fragrance upon the meadow-sweet to attract flying and creeping things"; whereas it happens that both the rose and the meadow-sweet—scarcely at all attractive to insects—are flowers which might fairly be quoted as cases in point against the large theory that the colours and scents of flowers have been acquired to attract flying and creeping things.

Illogical, too, is the attempt to excuse the apparent cruelty of fishing with hook and line by the suggestion that fish which are netted undergo greater agonies, because a hooked fish suffers little until it sees the angler, and a netted fish's torture is the more prolonged. Even if we grant that the hooked fish does not violently struggle until it has been alarmed by the sight of its captor—a large concession—it is only from that point onwards that the real agony, if any, occurs. Suppose it true that a hook through the lip is a small matter, surely something is felt when, in spite of desperate struggles, one is dragged ashore by that hooked lip?

But Sir Herbert Maxwell is least satisfying when he is constructing scientific "problems." His scientific doubts about the habits of spiders might so easily be set at rest, and his frank wonderment at the mound-building instincts of certain birds is almost more wonderful than the instinct. The reason why Nature has not given male spiders sufficient intelligence to escape from their murderous wives is, simply, that it is not good for the species that they should escape. They feed the females, who perpetuate the species; and Nature teaches to wild creatures nothing that would interfere with the perpetuation of the species. As regards the mound-building birds, it is amazing that one who plays so adroitly at times with the theory of evolution should suggest that each generation of mound-builders should have to make for itself its discoveries of the useful devices peculiar to the species. Such a suggestion amounts to an absolute negation of evolution.

Errors of scientific fact are also not infrequent in *Memories of the Months*. Thus it is not true that the common Clouded Yellow butterfly was "until lately supposed to be recruited only by wind-blown individuals from the Continent." It has always been recognised as a familiar resident British insect. The antlion "lava" is, no doubt, a misprint for "larva" on page 279; but the habit of the insect is wrongly described. The shower of sand which the creature jerks up is to prevent an insect from escaping out of its pit, not to bring the victim into it.

Apart, however, from a tendency to wander too much from his subject (even in the midst of apology for wandering, he will wander again), "these very desultory notes" are always readable. Their fault is their cocksureness; which is the more remarkable because, in writing of place-names, he says (on page 89): "Let no man be cocksure. Not long ago I rushed into print to explain the much-disputed name of Torvalvin in Knoydart." His explanation, he explains, was entirely wrong; but "cocksureness" is a fault of which it is much easier to be convicted than cured.

E. K. R.

ON THE GREEN.

THE prevalence and continuance of the wet weather in the year that is about to take its departure, has provided a shrewd test of the value of the rule of golf that refers to casual water. It is not to be said that the rule comes very well out of this ordeal by water. I may be perhaps more readily pardoned for the unkindly criticism, because it so happens that *pars parva fui* (I will not say a wholly unprotesting part) of the committee that framed the rule. A correspondent writes to me with an instance, in which he was sufferer, of what really is rather gross injustice under the rule. On a flattish, low-lying green he had the misfortune to find himself, in a competition that appears to have

been of some importance in his eyes, in casual water of some inch or two in depth within 5yds. of the hole. The stretch of shallow casual water extended for some 40yds. or so back from the green. It was his fate then, under the rule, to be obliged to lift his ball and drop it behind the water, 40yds. or more farther away from the hole, and with all this lake to loft over to get back again. As if to emphasise the iniquitous nature of the cruelty, it happened that his partner got into the same stretch of water, with a much inferior approach stroke, just without the 20yds. radius from the hole. The latter then, being technically off the putting green, was allowed to drop his ball on dry land by the side of the spot where he found it in the water, and had a clean run up to the hole. This is law; it is hardly equity. To be sure, it may be said that the case never ought to have occurred, that water ought not to be lying within 5yds. of the hole, that the hole ought to have been changed, and so on; but in a year like the present this is rather of the nature of a counsel of perfection, and it is certain that if we are to continue golfing life under the consulship of Jupiter Pluvius, as at present, it is the kind of accident that will happen often, even on the best-regulated inland, if not also on some seaside, courses.

The Mitcham Common donkey has a reputation. Golfers who play there state that with the fore legs hobbled he can kick you on either side of the head he likes with his hind leg, which is, no doubt, a good performance. Lately he has been in the Justices' Court, appearing by proxy only, the question being whether he had a right to graze on the common. The justices came to the conclusion that they had no jurisdiction against the donkey's claim of right, so doubtless he will remain as a picturesque feature in a landscape that really does want a little relief, good though the golf is, and the putting greens very much more than good.

North Berwick, no less than St. Andrews, is trying to find salvation from its congestion in multiplying courses. There is the good old-established one that has been within the memory of man, even of the young man, so much extended and improved. There is a links—so I am told, though I never have played on it—to the east of the town. And the proposal now is to start a new course, altogether to the west of the abominable eel-burn that has so much to answer for. This will go stretching away along the shore of the Firth of Forth till it almost touches Archerfield. To get in the space, it appears that they will have to take away the long hole up to where Crawford has his beneficent drink tent, and so rob the present course of two of its most westerly holes. Perhaps they can be replaced without loss, for they are not among the most interesting, as laid out at present. All this new ground that it is proposed to use is of the right sandy soil—good potential golfing stuff. It will be all right when once you get there. That, perhaps, will be the trouble—the getting there. The start for this new course will be most convenient for Mr. Laidlay. His house will be just about opposite the first tee, as one may suppose.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

OE'R FIELD & FURROW.

SCENT has been variable, even beyond its usual uncertainty. Last week on one day almost every pack that went out could run, on other days hounds could scarcely pick their way, even over the grass enclosures, and were beaten directly plough intervened. On other days hounds started well, but as soon as they met with the slightest difficulty, or when a fox turned down wind, they could do nothing. Thus a fox in Stapleford Park was hunted on one day by the Cottesmore until he was headed, when nothing more could be done; and of the others that were found, though they afforded fair sport, yet in each case hounds were run out of scent sooner or later. Last week everybody missed the best run the Quorn have had for some time. There were scarcely a score of followers to see the Quorn hounds at Costock. A good fox with a clear start, and hounds not over-ridden, made a point which is rather over than under seven and a-half miles in 40min. The pace was great, and the fox, starting from the outskirts of Bunny, ran very straight over some of the best of the Monday country right up to the Belvoir borders. Champion, late of the Kildare hounds, has been showing sport in Cheshire, and this pack have had some very fine gallops. Indeed, on Monday, when the Quorn and Mr. Fernie's, at Kettleby and Foxton respectively, could make very little of it, the Cheshire were galloping for an hour. None but those who were quite at the top of the hunt ever had a chance to steady their horses. Yet after going for half-an-hour with the ground in its present state a pull was most devoutly desired. Indeed, some horses were told out altogether long before the end came. The points in favour of riders were a check at a gorse and the fact that the run was not straight. Twice my correspondent tells me he had to ease his horse, and had more or less given up the chase and taken to the road when hounds came back to him, and he was near enough to see hounds run from scent to view, and kill in the open. In the Banbury district of their country the Heythrop had a really useful day last week. For a wonder the weather was fine, and there was a large gathering—Mr. and Mrs. Brassey, Lord North, Lord Algernon Gordon Lennox, from Broughton Castle (most picturesque of houses and gardens), Mr. Hardinge, Miss May Brassey, and a small detachment from Oxford. Readers of COUNTRY LIFE now have an idea of the pack, and Sturman, their huntsman, knows well how to handle them. Hounds ran well, but rather fitfully. Perhaps the early morning part, when the fox, crossing the road, dropped down into the valley, was as pretty as any part of the run. But, after all, they hunted all day, and left off only at dusk; and what more can you desire?

The steady growth of hare-hunting is very satisfactory. A pack of harriers is always popular with the farmers. Nor is this to be wondered at. Fox-hunting is beyond the means of farmers and their sons, but there is generally a useful nag about the farm, and a great deal of sport can be seen with harriers when man and horse have a day to spare. Moreover, an active man can see a great deal of fun on foot with harriers that are allowed to hunt their game in the orthodox way. This week I have heard of two new packs in contemplation—one for the Windsor country, which has been hunted in succession by the late Prince Consort, Sir Robert Harvey, and the Berks

and Bucks before they turned their attention entirely to the stag. There seems to be a general wish for a pack in the neighbourhood. Then Lord Suffolk in Berkshire wishes to start a pack to hunt the country round Charlton. This is to follow in his father's footsteps, for the late Lord Suffolk was a first-rate judge of a harrier, and wrote charmingly of the sport. The country round Malmesbury hunted by the V.W.H. and the Duke of Beaufort should make an excellent one for harriers. Malmesbury is now a very excellent hunting centre, and the Charlton Harriers will add to its attractions in that way. The difference between the cost of the up-keep of a pack of harriers and of foxhounds is very great. For example, a very sporting pack that I know of considers itself fairly well off if its subscriptions amount to £160 a year. No doubt with harriers expense is considered more carefully than with foxhounds, and they are not only cheaper actually, but relatively. The Master and committee of a pack of harriers do not think so much of what they must have as of what they can manage to do without.

I am not sure whether the Pytchley were the first Hunt to establish hedge-cutting competitions, but I am sure that the Grafton are doing wisely to establish them. In the first place, these trials tend to keep alive the art of making a sound fence, and they encourage the men, who are mostly sportsmen at heart. The labourers of a district are better friends to hunting than, perhaps, is always remembered. These competitions are, too, a very useful object-lesson for the members of the Hunt, especially for the town-bred ones. When we come to realise the amount of skill and labour that goes to the making of a really strong cut and laid fence we may be less careless about doing mischief, and we understand better what a real tax the damage we do is on the farmer. There is, of course, the damage fund, but that is, in too many cases, administered as a propitiatory offering to our enemies rather than as a well-deserved compensation to some of our best friends. X.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CELLINI'S NATIVITY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—At this season of the year it may interest your readers to see this photograph of an exquisite piece of carving. It is framed, and hangs in the



Mayor's parlour at the Guildhall, Winchester, and has a historic as well as literary interest, since it is a Florentine piece done by that extraordinary man and fine artist, Benvenuto Cellini. The subject, as you see, is the Nativity.—X.

ACHILL ISLAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Recently, in the *Times*, Sir Harry Johnston suggested turning Achill Island into a national park, where animals could be preserved which are being exterminated, and others, which have already long since disappeared from these shores, reintroduced. I am afraid this delightful suggestion displays a good deal of ignorance concerning the Achill of to-day, and the internal evidence of the communication in question confirms this opinion. For instance, there are no wild or other deer in Achill; the people do not exist under prehistoric conditions; and, most distinctly, the island is wanting in woodland—that is the most noticeable part about the place. The only pretence of a wood is a plantation round one gentleman's house at the Sound. Wild ponies are not, and there is not the slightest evidence that the dogs are descendants of any other than the usual canine ancestors. The idea of such a naturalist's paradise is entrancing. But when one descends to facts, it is at once apparent that it is hopelessly impracticable. There are no woods for forest-creatures to live in. There is only bare, damp bog—everlasting bog—and the surface of the island does not even now provide enough grazing for the wretched half-starved cows and sheep that only just manage to exist there. Further, the people would never leave the island, and there are about 5,000 to be reckoned with. They are mostly inveterate poachers, and it would be practically impossible to preserve animals or game of any kind. But national park or no national park, Achill is a place of much interest, many delights for body and mind, and well repays a visit. The air is dry, bracing, and invigorating, and the scenery near the shore, in some places, grand. The precipices near Achill Head are stupendous, and it is there



that the one or two flocks of goats—now wild—are to be found. Several of the bays in Achill are idealistic. Keel Bay, with the curiously sea-

of which are even now visible, so strongly was it built, was her principal stronghold.—J. HARRIS STONE.

BARNES RECTORY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The accompanying drawing represents the Rectory House of Barnes as it is, but as it is not likely to be much longer. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, from whom the living is held, they having had the manor of "Berne" given to them by the Saxon king Athelstan, have long been of opinion that the rectory is too large for the necessities of the rector, and its fate has for some time been in suspense. The recent melancholy suicide of one of the curates, who, as is generally the case here, resided with the rector, may, perhaps, have put an end to that suspense and decided the fate of the rambling but (both inside and out) picturesque house. Of the history of the rectory itself there is no absolutely accurate record, though local opinion inclines to the belief that it dates from James I., but, if so, it is an extremely poor representative of the buildings of that period. It should, however, be stated that, of more recent years, one or two of the rectors have been men of considerable means, and, not finding the house altogether convenient to their requirements, enlarged it, or rather altered it, to suit their own wants and ideas. Meanwhile, other houses have undoubtedly served as rectories here, they doing so, probably, while the actual one was undergoing these repairs. It is, indeed, somewhat remarkable that while Barnes was, quite within recent memory, a most picturesque village, the rectory itself, even though close to the undoubtedly picturesque church, has never been one of the most quaint of the old houses. The Homestead, Frog Hall, and, above



fretted, anemone-pooled rocks, called Cathedral Rocks, its pebbly ridge, and large sea-trout lake close to the shore, has probably a future before it as a seaside resort. And then Kim Bay! Beautiful, absolutely quiet, positively houseless Kim! The strand of fine firm sand, flanked on either side with black rocks, showing deep purple patches where the baby mussels in their myriads grow and multiply. The precipitous green-clad cliffs on either side, like two protecting arms, stretched seaward, and at the back of the bay a sweet, green little valley, spreading its Arcadian verdure and heather upwards to the north, finally ending in mighty Croaghan, 2,192ft. above the surrounding Atlantic. Between Kim Bay and the quaint, old-time hamlet of Dooagh, with its miserable cabins, where poverty is the predominant partner, high up on the hillside, lies a mossy road, in the middle of which is Boycott's Seat. Captain Boycott once inhabited Corrymore House in that neighbourhood, before he migrated to the mainland and gave a new epithet to the language. Many stories are told of him. In addition to the sea-trout lake of Keel, there are one or two inland lakes and babbling streams where the common speckled trout are to be found. The most picturesque of these bog streams is that at Dooagh, on the south of the island, where its exit to the sea is a pleasing and characteristically Achill picture. There are few ruins of any merit in Achill, with the notable exception of Grace O'Malley's Castle. She was a female pirate, who lived in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Her castle at Achill Sound, considerable remains

all, Milbourne House, named after an ancient Plantagenet, if not Norman, family, are far in advance of it in that respect. The latter is extremely old



and, especially inside, betrays its antiquity. It has also had the honour in past days of having been occupied by Henry Fielding, the illustrious author of "Tom Jones." Other celebrities are not lacking here as residents of past times. Tonson, secretary to the Kit Cat Club, Sir Francis Walsingham, Lord Chesterfield (author of the contemptible, though popular, letters to his son), Heydegger, Master of the Revels to the first Georgian monarch, Sir Lancelot Shadwell, and many others, have all been inhabitants of Barn Elms, now the Ranelagh Club. Heydegger was a wit, and once told a nobleman at Barn Elms who asked him what he, a Swiss, could be doing in England: "I came from Switzerland and have made a fortune. Did you ever know an Englishman who could go to Switzerland and do that?" It was at Barn Elms also that Anna Brudenel, when Countess of Shrewsbury, held the horse of her lover, the Duke of Buckingham, while he ran her husband—who was not *un mari complaisant*—through in a duel. Barnes is too full, however, of historical interest (though no proper history of it has ever been written) to be disposed of in a letter. And, though our rectory may not be the most beautiful house in a once beautiful village, it is still surrounded by sufficiently interesting and historical spots to make a picture of it worthy of a place in your columns. So, too, is our ancient church with its old bell, on which the clock struck the hours in Roman Catholic days, as well as its "rose" grave, perpetuating the memory of a London tradesman named Rose, who left £20 "for the use of the poor and to support a rose tree on his grave." So, also, are the ancient customs of the rector being allowed to cut down any tree on the common when he required firewood, of his having the right to fish in the pond, and of his being required to send annually a "goodly carp" to each of the canons of St. Paul's and a fat capon to the Dean.—J. BLOUNDELLE-BURTON.

A BIRDS' BREAKFAST-TABLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph of a birds' breakfast-table, which you may care to insert, partly on its own merits, and partly as an inducement to other people to do something to alleviate the terrible sufferings of our feathered friends during a severe snow-storm. I feel sure that if more people realised the pleasure to be derived from watching the poor little things enjoying such a feast, there



would be many more "birds' breakfast-tables" than at present exist. It should also be remembered that it is not only when the ground is covered in snow that birds find a difficulty in finding food, but it should be provided for them throughout the winter months, so that they may know where to find it when the pinch comes.—F. C.

MEADOW FRIENDS.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The accompanying photographs, taken by a pupil of mine, Mr. Nunneley, 3rd Royal West Kent Regiment, an enthusiastic amateur, exhibit the extreme familiarity existing between a couple of kids and a colt which have lived together in one of my meadows for a few months. It may interest some of your readers to know that the animals can be seen any day hobnobbing in the



most friendly manner, and evidently deriving the keenest enjoyment from each other's society.—W. J. BOSWORTH.

BEDSIDE BOOKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am delighted with your idea of bedside books. For many years I have never been without some favourites. They have borne the test of time, and are full of variety to suit various moods. I take it that a bedside book must be one that lends itself to reading for particular passages and in a fragmentary way. Here is my list: Horace's "Odes," which I put very high, Cowper's "Letters," delightful at all times, "David Copperfield," "The Mill on the Floss," "Pendennis," Newman's "Apologia," Ruskin's "Modern Painters," Vol. I., Wordsworth's Sonnets, Shakespeare's Sonnets, "In Memoriam," Keats's Sonnets, and the "House of Life" Sonnets of Dante Rossetti. The last lines of these are full of suggestions of thought. Plato's "Republic" (for those who do not read Greek, Davies and Vaughan's translation is as delightful as it is excellent, and is especially strong in its rendering of famous and striking passages). For books of a more devotional cast nothing is so good as the Psalms, for those who read Latin in the Vulgate, or for others in the incomparable version of the Prayer-book. At times the ancient Latin hymns are acceptable, and we know that "George Herodert" delighted Mr. Gladstone as a bedside book. In such a series the print is of more importance than the size. What a charming Christmas present a set of such books in a small revolving case to stand on one's chota-hazri table would be.—T. F. D.

